ENCHANTED LIVING

ISSUE NO. 54 SPRING 2021

$12.95 USA | $14.95 CAN

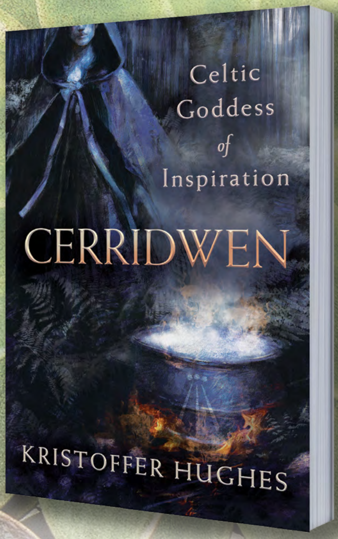
5 4>

0 74470 28145 0

The FAERIE QUEEN *Issue*

Enchanting New Products

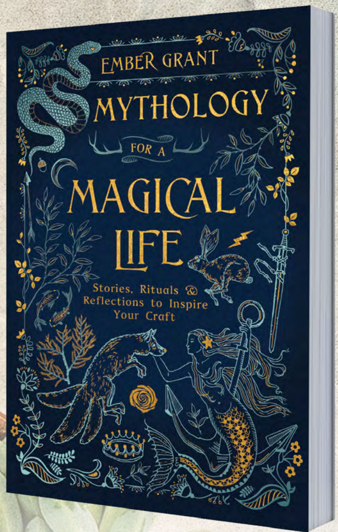
FROM LLEWELLYN


Celtic Goddess of Inspiration
CERRIDWEN
KRISTOFFER HUGHES

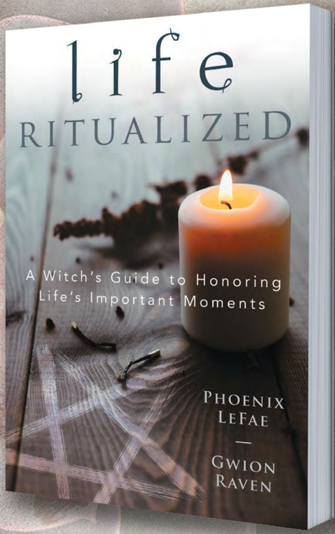
9780738763828 • $21.99
Evoke the magic of ecstatic poetry and song as you explore the many secrets of Cerridwen's cauldron of inspiration.

URBAN
Faery
MAGICK
CONNECTING WITH THE FAE IN THE MODERN WORLD
TARA SANCHEZ

9780738764214 • $19.99
The fae are adapting to the urban world; this book introduces you to dozens of faeries and offers tips for interacting with them.


EMBER GRANT
MYTHOLOGY
FOR A
MAGICAL
LIFE
Stories, Rituals & Reflections to Inspire Your Craft

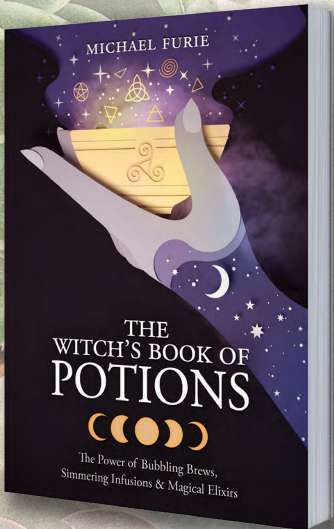
9780738763101 • $18.99
Rekindle your craft and add new energy to your magic with twelve myths and their spells, meditations, and affirmations.


life
RITUALIZED
A Witch's Guide to Honoring Life's Important Moments
PHOENIX LEFAE
GWION RAVEN

9780738764658 • $18.99
Make your experiences more sacred and meaningful with this guide for ritualizing life's many transitions.

Alana Fairchild
Kali Oracle
Ferocious Grace and Supreme Protection with the Wild Divine Mother

9780738768427 • $25.95
From Alana Fairchild, this oracle card set is an offering of guidance, clarity, and healing that invokes love and divine blessing.

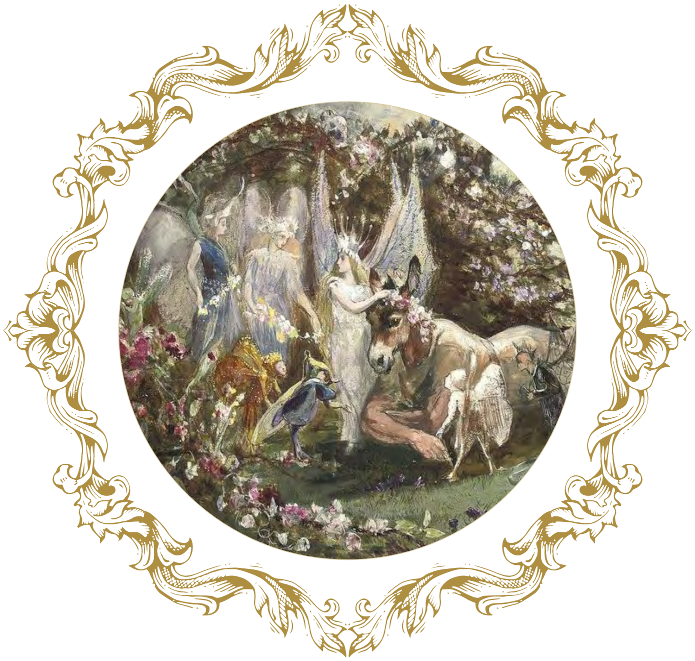

MICHAEL FURIE
THE WITCH'S BOOK OF POTIONS
The Power of Bubbling Brews, Simmering Infusions & Magical Elixirs

9780738764955 • $16.99
A fun, practical book on potion-making that explores brews, infusions, and elixirs for healing, cleansing, protection, and love.

LLEWELLYN
Publishing for the Body, Mind, Spirit Since 1901
1-800-THE-MOON • www.Llewellyn.com •

Letter From the Editor

Spring 2021



Titania and Bottom by John Anster Fitzgerald. Wikimedia Commons

It's been a challenging year for many of us, to say the least, and with the new year and the new spring issue, we thought we'd celebrate taking to the forest in true (and socially distanced) faerie queen style, with moss-soft blankets and glimmering lanterns in tow. And by faerie queen we mean Titania, Mab, Morgan le Fay, Gloriana, the goddess Diana, and all the rest of those ultra-magical powerful ladies who exist in folklore, myth, and, possibly, our own lives. At the heart of our inspiration is that Shakespearean image of the incredibly glamorous Titania, sung to sleep by faeries, with her hair splayed around her in the moss, lying on that bank "where the wild thyme blows, / Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows, / Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, / With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine." What could be more perfect than that mix of glamour, enchantment, and the wild forest, with a woman at the center of it who might be asleep now but is about to wake?

We did an entire *A Midsummer Night's Dream* issue in 2015, and now we wanted to honor all those queens who spread enchantment and generally take no prisoners (at least not too many). Or, as Veronica Varlow puts it in this month's column, queens who "stood in their power and saved themselves." To that end, we filled this issue with homages to the queens of old as well as ideas for incorporating some of that faerie queen vibe into your own life, whether through glamping in the enchanted wood, conjuring floral puddings, handcrafting perfume, performing self-love rituals, or getting in touch with your inner faerie queen. Of course you can also follow the example of reader Helly Blossom, who gets into a faerie queen mood by "entering the room with magical forest music playing in my back pocket, throwing sparkly sequins all over the floor, and then telling my fiancé that he is a good loyal subject!"

We hope this issue inspires you to not only look to the beauty of the forest and the art and literature that imagines the enchantresses who live there, but to also look inward and, as Monica Crosson puts it, see yourself "with fresh eyes as the beautiful warrior queen [or king] you are."

Love,

Carolyn Turgeon

Subscribe, buy back issues,
sign up for our weekly newsletter,
and check out our latest selection
of whimsical faerie jewelry
and other sweet little gifts.

Visit us online at

ENCHANTED
LIVING

VOLUME 54 | *Spring 2021*

FOUNDER and PUBLISHER
Kim Cross

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Carolyn Turgeon

ART DIRECTOR
Lisa Gill

PHOTO EDITOR
Steve Parke

SENIOR EDITOR
Grace Nuth

POETRY EDITOR
Mary McMyne

TRAVEL EDITOR
Jill Gleeson

COPY EDITOR
Robert Horning

ADVERTISING SALES
Sara Vesely
sara@faeriemag.com

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Rona Berg

CONTRIBUTORS
Sara Cleto, Susann Cokal,
Monica Crosson, Theodora Goss,
Katharyn Howd Machan, Alise Marie,
Danielle Prohom Olson, Briana Saussy,
Susan Ilka Tuttle, Kirsty Stonell Walker,
Veronica Varlow, Brittany Warman,
The Wondersmith

ARTISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS
Mary Jane Ansell, Elizabeth Elder,
Lillian Liu, Joy Marshall,
Rebecca Moss, Ed Org,
S. Blackthorn Riddle, Tricia Saroya,
Marsha Steckling, Charles Vess,
Guinevere von Sneeden

CONTACT US:
info@faeriemag.com
Enchanted Living
P.O. Box 26452
Gwynn Oak, MD 21207

Faerie Magazine/Enchanted Living Copyright ©2021.
No portion of *Enchanted Living* may be reproduced, duplicated,
or reprinted without prior written permission from the Publisher.
ISSN: 1554-9267, recorded with the U.S. Library of Congress.
Enchanted Living is published in the United States of America.

ISSUE 54 | *Spring*

FICTION, POETRY & ESSAYS

7 NINE CROWNS FOR FAERIE QUEENS *by Grace Nuth Illustration by Guinevere von Sneeden*

46 FIND YOUR INNER FAERIE QUEEN *by The Wondersmith*

52 TAM LIN REMEMBERS THE FAERIE QUEEN *by Theodora Goss*

59 SANS MERCI *by S. Blackthorn Riddle*

71 AS BRANCHES BUD AROUND SMALL NESTS *by Katharyn Howd Machan*

105 ARC WINNER MARY JANE ANSELL

HOME, FASHION & BEAUTY

28 AT HOME: FAERIE QUEEN DECOR *by Rona Berg*

40 TITANIA: AN ALLURING PERFUME OIL *by Susan Ilka Tuttle*

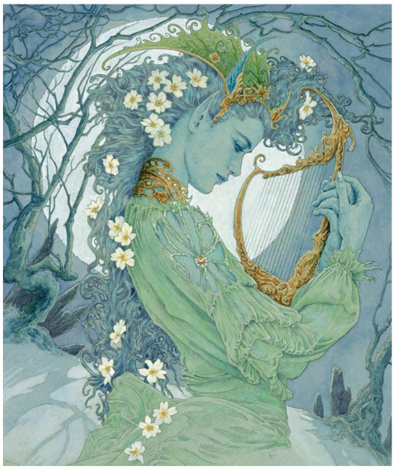
43 FEATURED FAERIE QUEEN *Photography by Lillian Liu Model Theresa Fractale*

44 TITANIA SLEEPS *by Frank Cadogan Cowper*

48 BREWING PERIDOT *by The Wondersmith*

86 FAERIE QUEEN BEAUTY SECRETS *by Alise Marie, The Beauty Witch™*

97 FEATURED FAERIE QUEEN *Photography by Marsha Steckling Model Sharron Roads*



72 ED ORG'S ENCHANTED WOMEN *by Jill Gleeson*

64 ENCHANTED WOODS OF FOLKLORE AND FABLE *by Carolyn Turgeon Photography by Rebecca Moss*

30 FLORAL MILK PUDDINGS *Recipes and photography by Gather Victoria*

SPECIAL FEATURES

21 INVOCATION TO TITANIA *by Sara Cleto and Brittany Warman*

36 WHICH FAERIE QUEEN ARE YOU? *by Theodora Goss*

50 THE CURSE, THE CURE, AND THE QUEEN *by Briana Saussy*

54 FAERIES OF THE FOREST *by Carolyn Turgeon Photography by Joy Marshall*

60 ONE KNIGHT STAND *by Kirsty Stonell Walker*

79 THE QUEEN OF DREAMS *by Monica Crosson*

81 SEVEN LIFE LESSONS FROM FAERIE QUEENS *by Susann Cokal*

92 MORGAN OF THE FAERIES *by Rona Berg*

95 ÉTAÍN: MY PERSONAL JOURNEY WITH A FORGOTTEN FAERIE QUEEN *by Grace Nuth*

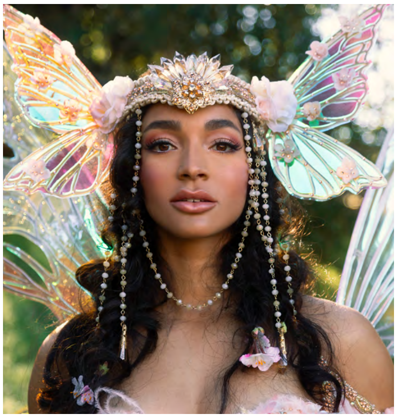
COLUMNS

98 LIFE OF A LOVE WITCH *by Veronica Varlow*

106 FROM OUR READERS

8 ON OUR COVER: FAERIE QUEENS *by Carolyn Turgeon Photography by Steve Parke*

22 GLAMOROUS FAERIE QUEEN SANCTUARIES *Text by Jill Gleeson Styling and photography by Tricia Saroya*



100 RAIMENT FOR A FAERIE QUEEN *by Carolyn Turgeon Photography by Elizabeth Elder*

CONTRIBUTORS

Enchanted Living's The Faerie Queen Issue

Theodora Goss

Theodora Goss is the author of the Extraordinary Adventures of the Athena Club fantasy series, starting with *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*, as well as three collections of short fiction and poetry. She teaches writing at Boston University and in the Stonecoast MFA program. She was born in Hungary and grew up on fairy tales, including stories about the faerie queen Tündér Ilona. (Tündér means "faerie" in Hungarian.) "The Hungarian fairyland is actually in Transylvania," she says. "It's the land of faeries rather than vampires—and my grandmother was born there. Coincidentally, her name was Ilona! But I think that if you believe in magic, any place can be fairyland."

Lillian Liu

Lillian Liu is an award-winning photographer and classical pianist who currently resides in Vancouver, Canada. She's a part of the Free Spirit humanitarian collective in Paris and travels to create with incredible humans. Her work has been featured in *Vogue*, *Marie Claire*, Penguin Random House, Atlantic Records, and more. Liu's goal is to bring characters to life—and in Theresa Fractale, pictured on page 43, she saw ancient magic manifesting in flesh. "The goal of the shoot," she says, "was to portray matriarchal power and wisdom with a touch of otherworldly whimsy that can only be found within the pages of a book or in-between realms."

Joy Marshall

Joy Marshall is a fantasy photographer, writer, and occasional self-portraitist from Massachusetts. She can often be found curled up with a good book or wandering the forest dreaming of new stories. She loves using color and light to create imagery that wraps the viewer in a story and is inspired by foggy mornings, classic paintings, folklore, mythology, symbolism, and the natural world. For her shoot for this issue, "visions of the faerie queen's natural habitat flowed after spending some time in New England forests," she says. "What a delight to envision faeries lounging on moss-covered rocks and having the team to bring that magic to life!"

Danielle Prohom Olson

Danielle Prohom Olson, a.k.a. Gather Victoria, weaves together ancestral food wisdom, herbal folklore, and goddess mythology while making a culinary pilgrimage through the seasonal celebrations of the wheel of the year. She's inspired by the ancient arts of magical cookery and the plants, foods, and dishes at the heart of our most sacred traditions. She invites you to join her in reviving "the old ways" of food magic, the art of bringing blessings to ourselves and our communities. In this issue, she explores the food folklore of the great faerie queens of English literature. "These ethereal beings certainly loved their dessert," she says, "especially anything made with cream!"

Tricia Saroya

Tricia Saroya calls herself a "creatrix," an out-of-the-box artist that imagineers beauty in a multitude of mediums. She loves to weave spells of delight and provide a magical mirror where the viewer can discover their own divine creative muse. She's contributed to multiple issues of this magazine (including our original *A Midsummer Night's Dream* issue), as well as to the *Faerie Handbook*, *Mermaid Handbook*, and *Unicorn Handbook*. For this issue Saroya created sumptuous settings to inspire the faerie queen inside each of us. "We are all deserving of a beautiful place where we can remember who we truly are," she says, "a miraculous being deserving of love and attention."

Marsha Steckling

Marsha Steckling is a photographer in Boulder, Colorado, specializing in pet and family photography. She has photographed over 3,300 dogs for her local animal shelter and just completed her book, *Boulder Dog Tails*, about them. Steckling also enjoys photographing abandoned buildings, street scenes, and her mother Sharron, who is in her 80s (see page 97). On her mother's 80th birthday, they photographed her as the faerie queen, her mother's favorite character from childhood stories. "We had a great time creating this image together," Steckling says. "And we were stopped by a little girl who was in awe because she had just met a real-life faerie queen!"

NINE CROWNS FOR *Faerie Queens*

by GRACE NUTH
Illustration by GUINEVERE VON SNEEDEN

- **Crown of Sisterhood**, set with rose quartz with a design of clasped hands on the brow. This crown is never bought, always given.
- **Crown of Righteous Fury**, set with bloodstone and carved with depictions of snarling lions. A faerie queen hopes never to have to wear this crown, but when protecting innocents or defending justice, it can be invaluable.
- **Diadem of Darkest Night**, set with moonstone and silver crescent moons. This faerie queen knows that the only thing anyone should fear in the dark shadows is, perhaps, herself.
- **Wreath of Nature**, carved by dryads from a fallen branch given by the oldest oak tree in the wood. The queen who wears this knows that we are one with nature around us and that its joys and sufferings are ours as well.
- **Coronet of Kindness**, set in copper with sunstones that glow with an inner fire. It is fine to be nice, but it is better to be kind. This faerie queen has an awareness of the difference between the two.
- **Laurel of Longevity**, set with a large piece of amber, an ancient fern curled and suspended at its center. This queen not only receives long life but the endurance to do what she must for as long as she is needed.
- **Circlet of Enchantment**, set with iridescent labradorite, with a shimmer that can only be seen from certain angles. This crown allows the wearer to see the magic that flows through all things. Don't worry, this faerie queen won't turn you into a stag. Probably.
- **Garland of Growth**, made from ever entwining and growing ivy. A faerie queen should always learn from her mistakes and strive to improve her reign.
- **Tiara of Self-Worth**, set with aquamarine gems cut in the shapes of hearts. When this crown is worn, the bearer receives the epiphany that we are *all* faerie queens, every one of us who wishes to be so, regardless of birth, gender, or the judgment of anyone else.

ON OUR COVER

FAERIE QUEENS

Text by CAROLYN TURGEON

Photography by STEVE PARKE

We've long been fans of the magical illustrations of Arthur Rackham, especially those from the 1908 edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the faerie play (and faerie queen play) par excellence. Our cover shoot was based on two of these illustrations—Titania sleeping, which appeared on the frontispiece of the edition, and the dreamy, blurred illustration of "Fair Helena, who more engilds the night / Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light" from later in the play. Helena might not technically be a faerie queen but was a love-struck Athenian who spent one extremely faerie-struck night in the moonlit dew-bedazzled enchanted forest with all the nodding violets and woodbine canopies, so we thought she was close enough. Plus she spends the night tending two fae-struck suitors, and what could be more glamorous?

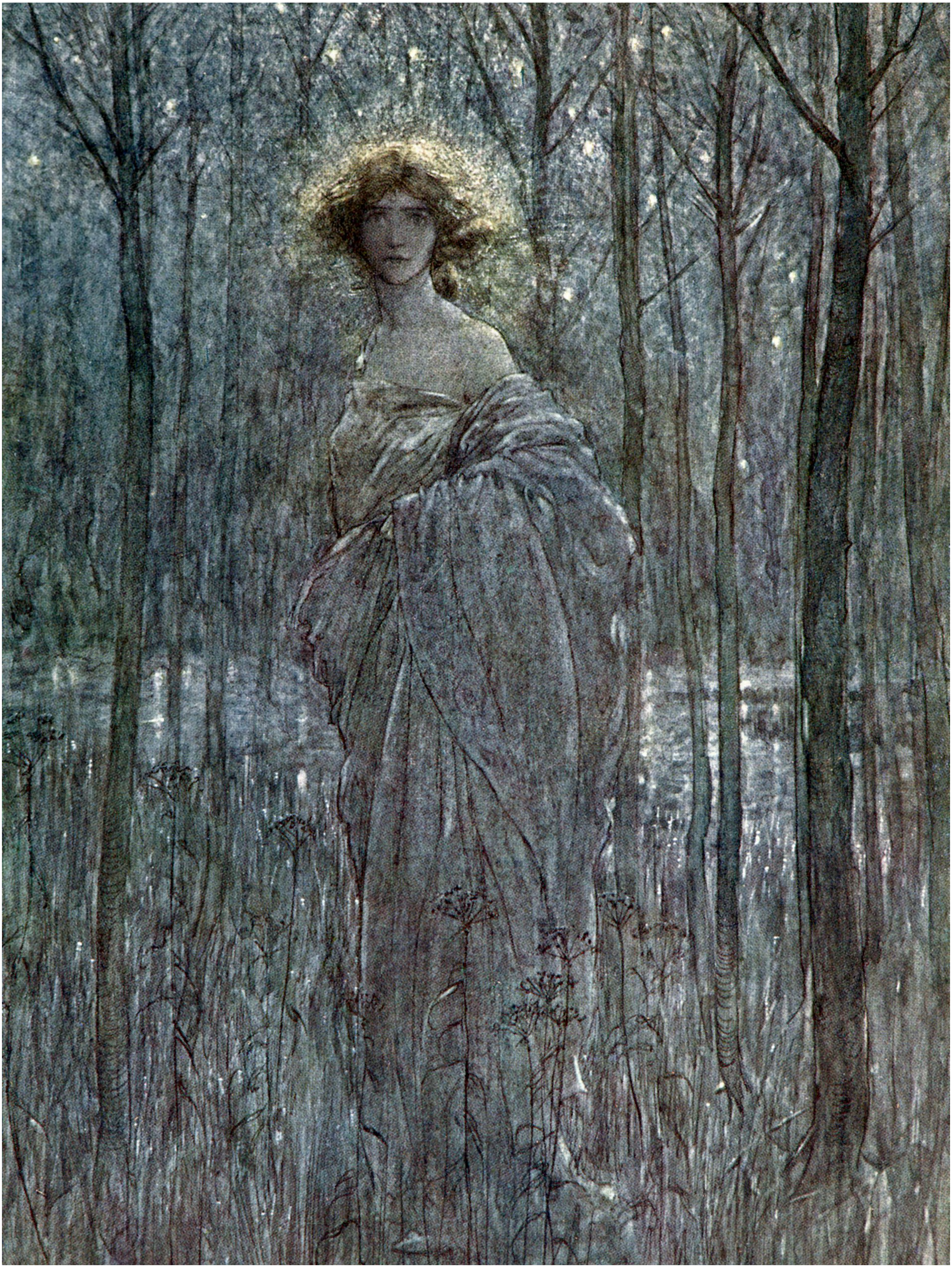
We attempted to re-create that silvery, dreamy vibe in the Baltimore woods, with a bit of help from some pale blooms, both real and less than real, as well as our two gorgeous models in diaphanous long gowns perfect for woodland frolicking. We loved the idea of two queens, side by side, reveling in the forest and (possibly) protecting each other from faerie kings, their puckish servants, and maybe an ass or two.

As it happens, both of these queens make strong protectresses. Model Nicola Uatuva has a background in coordinating youth health education and culinary nutrition programs in Baltimore as well as organizing lifestyle workshops and Black wellness-focused initiatives, with a strong emphasis on the magic of food—growing it, cooking it, being nourished by it. When asked what magical dish she especially loves, one fit for a faerie queen, she mentions the West African and Brazilian staple of akara made from black-eyed peas fried in palm oil. It's a beautiful dish, she says, one that's powerful with cultural and historical significance. It's also a ritual food used as an offering in Afro-Brazilian spiritual practices. This is what she thinks a faerie queen might eat.

Model Emily Merrill has trained as an herbalist and has loved plants and their magic since she was a child visiting her grandparents' West Virginia farm. How amazing, she says, that little seeds can grow to tall sunflowers. That plants can communicate with each other, send signals to each other in a language we can't understand, and that we can so easily grow our own magical, nourishing food. She associates faerie queens with orchids, she says, a feminine plant that shows off beauty, love, and fertility.

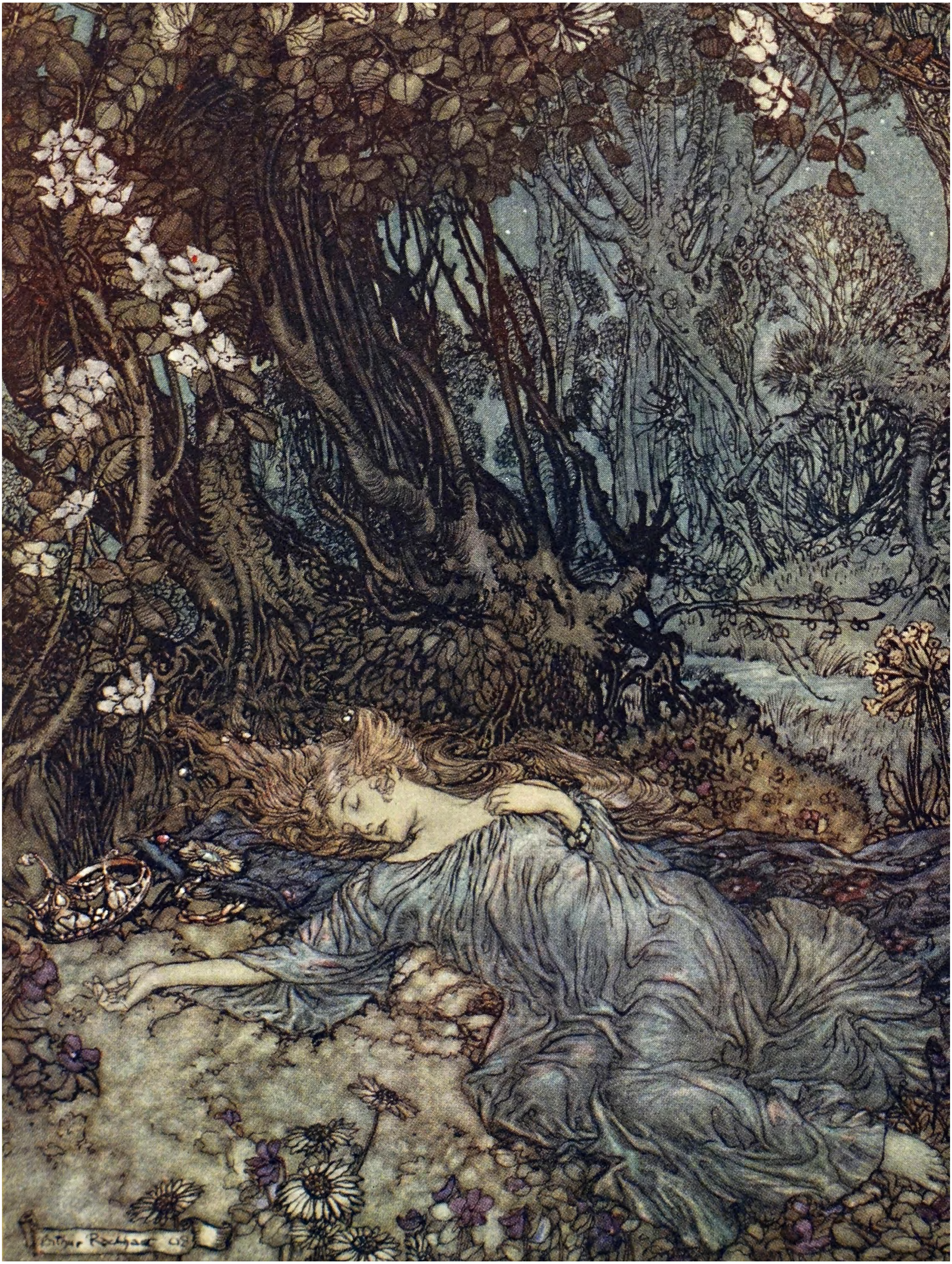
Who would have thought that Baltimore was full of faerie queens, in love with the alchemy of plants, who can find each other in the enchanted wood?

Models: Emily Merrill and Nicola Uatuva
Hair and Makeup: Nikki Verdecchia of NV Salon Collective
Dresses: Edye Sanford *Nicola's hair:* Solid Justice
Design consultant: Tricia Saroya
Accessories: Scarves loaned by Joi Brozek and
Jennifer Muck-Dietrich



I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.

—*A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act II, Scene I,
where Oberon describes Titania's bower


Arthur Rackham 08

Invocation to Titania

BY SARA CLETO AND BRITTANY WARMAN

What does it mean to be a faerie queen?

There are as many ways to answer this as there are stories of enchantment, stagings of *Romeo and Juliet*, and dreamers who page through Spenser.

But Titania has always been the faerie queen closest to our hearts.

This enchantress has beguiled mortals and fae alike since Shakespeare dreamed her up in 1595. Since her debut in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she has lent her name to one of the moons of Uranus and been depicted in media as diverse as Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* series and the cartoon *Gargoyles*. She has dominated our collective expression of what it truly means to be the queen of the faeries, and there's so much to learn from her.

Passion. Titania was a Romantic before there were Romantics. Her emotions are not something that can be denied. Sure, this may make her a bit more susceptible to love potions, but it's also the source of her charisma and presence.

Friendship. Surrounded by ladies-in-waiting, Titania values the company of her friends and misses the mortal ones dreadfully when they die. She remembers them and does her best to honor them after they're gone.

Confidence. There's no denying that Titania's marriage to Oberon is tempestuous. But she does not allow him to dominate her. Instead she holds to her purpose and her convictions, even when it leads to fights. She does not hesitate to stand up for what she believes is right.

Glamour. Watch any good production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and you just *feel* Titania's glamour. She's arresting, striking, and unafraid to take center stage both literally and figuratively. She commands our attention. Even when she falters, we can't take our eyes off of her.

True-sight. Seeing beauty even in the absurd is perhaps Titania's greatest power. Her dalliance with the donkey-headed actor, Nick Bottom, is portrayed as silly, shameful, even out of control ... But there's something beautiful and freeing about finding love in unexpected places.

Titania is a part of each of us—our most glamorous, passionate, enchanting self. Honor her by exuding confidence, remembering to look beyond the surface, and always wearing your finest ball gowns. Yes, even to the grocery store.

* * *

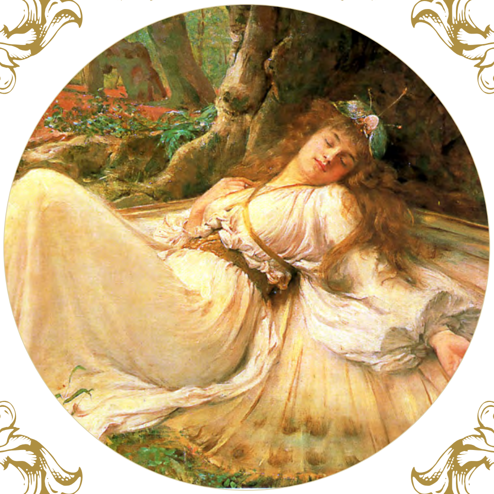
Sara Cleto and Brittany Warman are folklorists, authors, and teachers, as well as co-founders of The Carterhaugh School of Folklore and the Fantastic, which you can read more about at carterhaughschool.com.

Enchanting New Decks
from U.S. Games Systems, Inc.

The Field
TAROT
By Hannah Elizabeth Fofana
Fairy Wisdom Oracle
DECK & BOOK SET
By AMY BROWN
Written by NANCY BROWN
The Harmony Tarot
A DECK FOR GROWTH, HEALING AND SELF-CARE
Harmony Nice

Follow Us

Stamford, CT 06902 1-800-544-2637 Fax 203-353-8431 www.usgamesinc.com



Glamorous Faerie Queen SANCTUARIES

Text by JILL GLEESON
Styling and photography by TRICIA SAROYA

This is where we first meet Shakespeare's Titania: deep in the ancient forest, lying on her floral bower of sunny-hued oxlip and nodding violet, surrounded by wild thyme. A mist creeps beneath the luscious woodbine canopy that arches over her slumbering form. Her skin glints in the moonlight. Her eyes flit beneath her closed lids. Here and there fireflies dance like tiny stars, sometimes landing on the luxurious foliage that surrounds and protects the sleeping queen.

Were she to awaken, she'd alight on a downy soft carpet of moss and lichen to address—and dazzle—her faerie court. Instead she sleeps on, the light breeze bringing with it the scent of the sweet musk roses and blooming eglantine.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have such a place for ourselves, to retreat to the enchanted (yet ultra-glam) forest when we need a respite? Luckily, we can create our own faerie hideaways fit for a queen, no matter where we are—and even indulge in some faerie queen glamping.

Artist Tricia Saroya is an expert at creating magical spaces on the fly (and has done so for several previous issues of *Enchanted Living*, as well as for the *Faerie Handbook*, *Mermaid Handbook*, and *Unicorn Handbook*, not to mention countless fairy-tale weddings). She created the two ideas you see here as some Titania-esque inspiration, but you can use your imagination to craft your own faerie queen vibe.

First, if you have some space in your backyard or even a corner of your city apartment, you can conjure your own royal haven. The look and location are entirely up to you.

"My entire home is like the vignettes that I create," Saroya says. "I choose to be surrounded, as much as is humanly possible, by all things that bring me inspiration. I'm about the polar opposite of Marie Kondo. For me, more is better. I have beautiful rugs and textiles and stacks of books and mystical things around me. I encourage people to do whatever it is that helps them step into that place of magical possibilities. Because that's them, that's their soul, that's who they really are."

A faerie queen who finds inspiration in Saroya's lush, lavish imagery might begin building an alfresco boudoir by searching out a piece of furniture that practically demands a lazy afternoon of luxuriating. Explore swap meets and estate sales for some kind of outdoor chaise lounge or perhaps a fat, pillowy wicker chair and footstool—anything that allows you to sink within its environs and deeply relax.

Then add layer upon layer of gauzy textiles, which can be as straightforward as mosquito netting or scrim—a sheer, inexpensive cotton material easily found online. If you have a tent-type frame, festoon the fabric around and over it. Lacking that, you can staple fabric to the top of your backyard fence or wall, pulling it out and away from the structure and fixing it to the ground with a post.

The main thing, Saroya says, is to drape material everywhere "so you have these rich, luxurious folds of fabric that just puddle on the ground. And then repeat that kind of feeling on the chaise lounge or whatever you're working with—layers of fabric. Then you can find inexpensive carpets on Craigslist or in thrift stores. I put a little piece of plastic down on the ground and place the carpet on top of it." Equally important are the twinkle lights, of course, modern-day will-o'-the-wisps. "They're magical. They take us back to being a kid, to Christmas trees, to Disneyland, to faerie lights. The first time I ever saw fireflies I just about lost my mind!" Saroya says.

You might even create an indoor sanctuary decorated with twinkle lights and gauzy fabric—in a corner of your house, in your boudoir, even in your bathroom. Light candles. Bring the natural world indoors with plants like climbing ivy. Let your imagination run wild as you design your queenly escape.

If you prefer your faerie glamour on the move, pack up some mosquito netting; a small, simple carpet or woven mat (rattan works well); and a few pillows and head out to a local park or public forest. Drape the netting over a tree, scatter the pillows over the carpet, and recline, gazing at the sky as you allow your thoughts to ramble in any direction they choose.

That's what Grace Nuth, *Enchanted Living*'s senior editor, does when planning her ideal retreat. In her mind's eye she sees it on a friend's property, which abuts the Olentangy River in Ohio. She imagines a bell tent painted in symbols and shapes sacred to her, like foxes and hares. Celtic knots, too. Outside the tent is a dusky, muted gray, but inside? She envisions layers of velvet blankets and pillows heaped upon an air mattress, with rugs scattered beneath—all of it, every bit, in rich, vibrant hues.

"I think it would be wonderful," Nuth says, "if the outside would blend in with nature and then you open up the tent doors and inside you see a jewel box of deep reds and greens and purples, very sumptuous, medieval colors. And obviously you want some twinkle lights, but I also think twining vine would be beautiful around some of the tent poles. And I'd probably have a couple of wooden, X-frame, medieval-style folding chairs too."

Elaborate or simple, indoors or out, crafting your faerie queen abode is about "being intentional about creating a magical space," Saroya says. "It's being conscious about creating a space that you physically step into, so that in your awareness you take a deep breath and settle in and daydream or do something that brings you joy—just taking a moment to connect in with your soul."

What you do within your enchanted empire, even if nothing at all, is as important as the look of it. Sip tea from a lovely set like the one in Saroya's photographs. Write letters in longhand to your loves. Bring faerie queen friends along, creating an entire encampment, and tell tall tales into the night. Sing songs to the forest and each other, or simply listen to nature's music, the sound of the trees as they sway in the breeze, an owl's hoot, the soft padding of a night creature as it passes by just out of reach of the campfire's glow. Drink elderflower wine; eat small, sweet desserts and allow the crumbs to fall to your feet, feeding the forest floor.

Lisa Gill, *Enchanted Living*'s art director, says she would bring beautifully illustrated fairy-tale books to her special space and read them quietly to herself. "Another thing I would take," she says, "would be some seed or nuts for the squirrels and the birds. And if I were lucky, I'd see a deer or something else—raccoons or a little fox, who knows? I like to just observe and not disturb wildlife, so I would just be as quiet as possible out there in my beautiful little bed with my velvet pillows, hoping to invite some magic into that scenario."

You might also consider a few precious moments of meditation. Bring some essential oils with you, natural scents like lavender or geranium, peppermint or cinnamon, to aid in relaxation and help keep the biting insects at bay. Mist the air, or spray the oils into a silk handkerchief and inhale deeply. Himalayan salt balls, when warmed in a campfire, can be rolled underfoot, a treat for aching hiker's feet. Or simply dip your toes into a nearby creek for a cooling, soothing respite.

As you dress your queenly chamber, don't forget to pay equal heed to how you dress yourself. This is not a place for binding blue jeans or scratchy sweaters, says *Enchanted Living* editorial consultant Rona Berg. "I would envision myself in a very soft, flowy, organic cotton nightshirt or something like that. Some gorgeous fabric that is going to drape beautifully and just give me texture. You want to bring a very soft throw, maybe something that is warm like an angora, or velvet. In the spring, maybe an organic cotton. Things that you can really wrap yourself in and hug and cuddle yourself."

Suitably adorned, tucked within the place you dreamed of, it's time to finally and simply *stop*. "There's nothing wrong with taking a moment in quiet reflection or to enjoy something," Saroya says. "It invites a sense of calm and peace inside and lightens up the stress levels. It brings down your cortisols and allows you to breathe deeply. It gives you an opportunity to connect with your intentions, with your intuitions, with a deeper knowing inside yourself."

It's in doing this, Saroya continues, that you start noticing the world around you, in all its specific beauty, and "that's when you see magic. If you don't slow down and take the time to notice magic, you'll never see it. It's there with you, all the time around you. If you want to call it faeries, God, spirit—whatever! It wants to play with you! This world is delightful and beautiful, and we're so busy running that we don't stop to look and take it in. Creating an intentional place to do this as often as you can, to me, is just as important as exercise or brushing my teeth. It's essential for a life that's full of love and a life well lived."

Before creating your faerie queen hideaway in a public space, please check regulations regarding camping, the use of fire, alcohol, etc. Even queens have to follow a few rules.

Don't feel quite ready to create your own faerie queen boudoir? There are a host of luxe camping rentals that have done it for you.

Sandy Pines Campground

Tucked away in the chic coastal enclave of Kennebunkport, Maine, Sandy Pines lies within a sheltered beach forest boasting stunning sea views and refreshing ocean breezes. Quarters include large wood-framed glamping tents for couples and families complete with air conditioning, lighting, fire pits, and linens. Open mid-May through Mid-October. *sandypinescamping.com*

Collective Yellowstone

Glamping takes on a new meaning at this tony retreat in Big Sky, Montana. Located in the backcountry of the poetically named Moonlight Basin, Collective Yellowstone offers lush amenities—including 1,500 thread-count linens, down comforters, and designer-curated blankets as well as private, en suite bathrooms with rain-style showers, full flush toilets, and hot running water. In-tent massages are also available. *collectiveretreats.com/retreat/collective-yellowstone*

Dunton River Camp

This former cattle ranch in southwest Colorado offers posh safari-style tents set mere feet from the banks of the Dolores River. Goodies include an en suite bathroom with a six-foot soaker tub, double vanities, and towel warmers. Each tent comes with two mountain bikes with which to explore the camp's 500 acres of untrammeled meadow and forest. *duntondestinations.com/river-camp*

Little Raccoon Key, Georgia

Perfect for anyone who has ever dreamed of getting away to their own private island, Little Raccoon Key is home to a single glamping tent on an ancient bivalve reef off the coast of Georgia. Accommodations consist of a 26-by-15-foot solar-powered canvas tent heated by a wood-burning stove and featuring a memory-foam mattress. Be sure to keep an eye out for pods of dolphins on the boat ride to the island and back. *littleraccoonkey.com*

Sinya on Lone Man Creek

Perched in the heart of Texas Hill Country, Sinya on Lone Man Creek offers a massive, safari-style tent for two. Look for one-of-a-kind comforts like a century-old claw-foot tub and hand-sanded pine floors, along with Turkish cotton towels and a king-size bed lined with a goose-down comforter and pillows. Don't miss the spectacular hot tub on the back deck. *hillcountrysinya.com*

Follow Jill Gleeson at gleesonreboots.com.
See Tricia Saroya's creative projects at triciasaroya.com.

AT HOME: FAERIE QUEEN DECOR

by Rona Berg

Kitting out a faerie queen hideaway demands a high level of taste, and an eye for enchanting objets d'art that befit an ethereal royal. No minimalism here: The faerie queen abode, indoor and out, is inspired by the natural (and supernatural) world and incorporates lush elements from the forest along with other motifs from nature. Creating a faerie queen environment doesn't have to break the bank. If you are patient, you can unearth inspiring finds at thrift shops, garage sales, and estate sales.

Photography by TRICIA SAROYA

BURNING BRIGHT

Just Bee Cosmetics Candles offer some of the most unique blends we've seen. Lavender Fig features notes of lavender, fig, cedar, and fern, all ingredients that any faerie queen would love. Pomegranate and Lemon Rind is a blend of pomegranate, star anise, and lemon, perfect for spring. All are made with 100 percent natural cotton wicks, soy wax, organic coconut oil, and naturally gathered beeswax and are scented with essential oils. In three sizes: travel, 7-ounce, and 13-ounce. *shop.justbee.us*

A FLICKERING LIGHT

Handmade in India, these lovely Antiqued Zinc Latika Tabletop Lanterns (pictured here) hold one tea candle and are beautiful when laid out on a table or swinging from a hook on the porch. Available in small and large, these glass-and-metal lanterns cast a warm glow over any tabletop. You can also see them in the tableaux Tricia Saroya created for "Glamorous Faerie Queen Sanctuaries." *worldmarket.com*

FIRESTARTER

Our Magic Rainbow Firesticks come in a bundle of three and will turn any outdoor fire pit into a rainbow of luminescence. Simply toss a stick into the roaring blaze and watch as it transforms into a lovely blaze of color! *enchantedlivingmag.com*

LUSCIOUS LINENS

Gorgeous comforters and bedding that will wrap you in sumptuousness, hand crafted and dyed by artisans in California. From royal silks and velvets to linen, which is much more practical and still soft and beautiful. *bellanottelinens.com*

MOSSY KNOLL

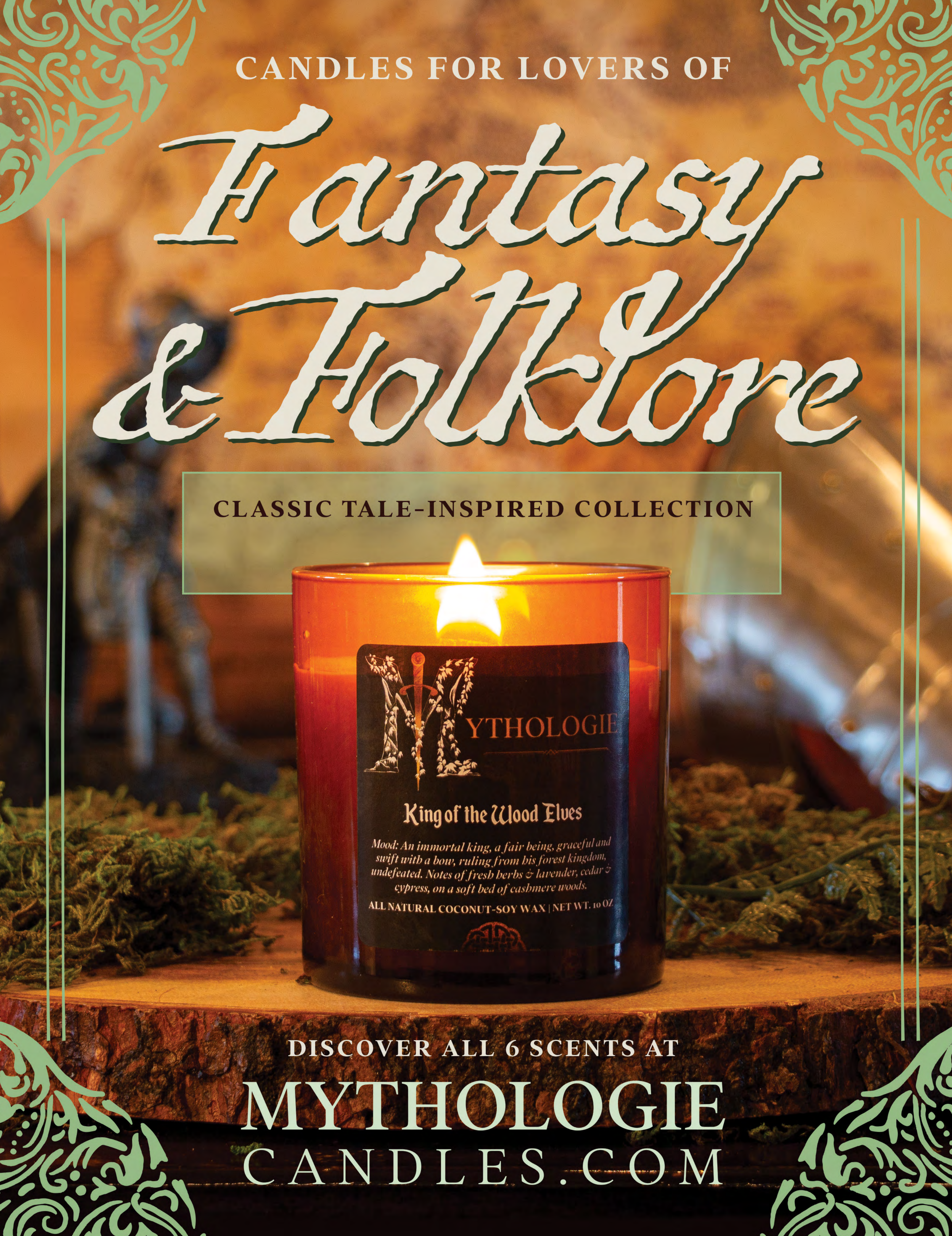
Transform your floor into a lovely mossy knoll with a handcrafted mossy rug by Argentine designer Alexandra Kehayoglu, who comes from a lineage of rug makers. Each rug is unique. Kehayoglu first created these beauties after graduating from art school, and you can tell that she is truly an artist. *awesomeinventions.com*

PLUSH SEATS

The Lindley Round Cotton Pillow Cover and Insert is a tufted floor cushion perfect for reading in front of the fire, a meditation on the deck, or a bout of daydreaming in the forest. Available in a range of soft pink, teal, blue, or violet, these floor cushions are practical (easy to wash) and poetic. *wayfair.com*

◆

Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg


MYTHOLOGIE
King of the Wood Elves
Mood: An immortal king, a fair being, graceful and swift with a bow, ruling from his forest kingdom, undefeated. Notes of fresh herbs & lavender, cedar & cypress, on a soft bed of cashmere woods.
ALL NATURAL COCONUT-SOY WAX | NET WT. 10 OZ

CANDLES FOR LOVERS OF

Fantasy & Folklore

CLASSIC TALE-INSPIRED COLLECTION

DISCOVER ALL 6 SCENTS AT

MYTHOLOGIE
CANDLES.COM

Floral Milk Puddings

CULINARY MAGIC
FIT FOR
A FAERIE QUEEN

* * *

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY DANIELLE PROHOM OLSON
(A.K.A. GATHER VICTORIA)

Floral Milk Puddings

Gather Victoria

It's a well understood fact of folklore that woe befalls those who neglect to offer the fae folk their just desserts—hence these old-fashioned creamy puddings. Inspired by blancmange and flummery, two popular "milk jellies" of the Tudor and Elizabethan Ages, they are perfumed, colored, and adorned with flowers—most suitable offerings for the great faerie queens of English literature and folklore.

Queen Mab's fondness for dairy is well attested to. In *Entertainment at Althorpe* (1603) Ben Jonson describes her as gathering with her elves "about the Cream-bowls sweet." John Milton in "L'Allegro" (1645) writes that the "Faery Mistress Mab" favored junkets (a mixture of cream, curds, and honey). Lady Margaret Newcastle's book of poems *The Pastime, and Recreation of the Queen of Fairies in Fairy-land* (1653) tells us that Queen Mab's faeries prepared her puddings and custards.

Queen Mab's predilection for all things sweet and creamy isn't surprising considering the fae folks' renowned obsession with milk. According to Robert Kirk in *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies* (1691), they were notorious for stealing dairy products. Three centuries later, in his classic book *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* (1911), Walter Evans-Wentz documented the ongoing Irish custom of offering milk to the faeries each night at faerie mounds, knolls, and trees. It was well understood that if you wanted your cows to give milk, the faeries must be granted their tithe. Failure to do so could even result in the cow itself being "taken."Queen Mab is believed to be inspired by the tales of mythical Irish Queen Medb, Maeve, Maev, Mave, or Maiv, names which suggest she was originally an earth or "sovereignty" goddess who held a great deal of influence over the fertility of the land, crops, and animals—especially the dairy. Medb is said to descend from the original faerie folk of Ireland, the Tuatha Dé Danann (the people whose mother is Dana). Some scholars speculate that it is the goddess Dana who survives in myth and legend as the queen of the faeries.

Shakespeare's famed Queen Titania from *A Midsummer's Night Dream* (1596) is also believed to have roots in the ancient world and faerie folklore. Shakespeare is said to have taken the name Titania from the Roman poet Ovid (43 B.C. to A.D. 18); Titania was Ovid's collective name for the daughters of the Titans, a godlike race who ruled the earth in the beginning. Ovid specifically equates her with the Roman Diana, a goddess of nature and woodlands whose worship was linked to holy groves and springs. During Shakespeare's era, one of Diana's popular epithets was Lady of the Faeries or Queen of the Faeries—and she was commonly offered bowls of milk on her holy days.

Like Diana who lives in wild or wooded places, Shakespeare's Queen Titania inhabits forest groves and waterways where the wild thyme blows, where oxlips grow and violets nod their heads. Titania sleeps in a riverbank, canopied with luscious honeysuckle interspersed with sweet-smelling ramblers and wild roses.

Diana also makes an appearance in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590). This poem blooms with flora, fauna, gardens, and images of the natural world, leading many to suggest his faerie queen is none other than "Dame Nature" herself. In her garden she beautifies herself with "all the weeds that bloom and blossom there ..." She "bath'd with Roses red, and Violets blue, / And all the sweetest Flowers that in the Forest grew."

Like any queen of nature, Queen Titania rules over the seasons that clearly follow her moods. In *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, her quarrel with King Oberon disrupts the coming of spring and the growing crops. She tartly reminds him, "I am a spirit of no common rate. / The summer still doth tend upon my state." Shakespeare's lines warn us of the perils that can befall us if the queen of the faeries is not given her proper respect.

So lest we risk the fertility of the coming spring, I think an old-fashioned milk pudding is called for. And befitting the faerie queen, it is infused and adorned with the spring flowers of folklore. Nodding patches of wild violets were once considered favored faerie haunts, primroses were called faerie cups, pansies were ingredients in faerie love potions, and tulips were used as faerie cradles.

Not quite a blancmange or a flummery, this dessert is a simple and easy fusion of both. By the 17th century, both desserts were set in decorative molds and usually made with a base of milk or cream mixed with gelatin or isinglass (sea moss). Often they were flavored with rose water or other floral water, liqueurs, and wine, and traditionally spiced with nutmeg.

Blancmanges were often colored: pomegranate juice or berry juice for pink and violet, saffron or turmeric for golden yellow, and varied herbs for green. These dishes were intended to entertain and delight through a fanciful appearance; many were served as centerpieces at grand feasts and molded in the shapes of fruits, flowers, and even astrological figures.

These kinds of jellied desserts fell out of vogue by the 20th century. There was a brief resurgence in the 1950s with Jell-O, but for the most part we no longer include milk jellies in our dessert repertoire. While we would be hard-pressed to consider them a health food today, they were once regarded as deeply restorative, healing and medicinal foods used for everything from feeding the ill, treating kidney problems, and easing typhoid. I'm not promising these fae puddings will do anything like that, but I'm betting they will curry a faerie queen's favor.

To be on the safe side, I made several versions. One I flavored with violet liqueur, one with rose water, one with blueberry syrup, and one with lemon (which I colored golden with just a wee touch of turmeric). The process of making these floral milk puddings is essentially the same, only varying with the addition of flavors, the amount of gelatin, and the choice of coloring. The result is both creamy and slightly wobbly, a cross between Jell-O and pudding and very delicious.

GOLDEN LEMON FAERIE PUDDING

VIOLET MOLDED FAERIE DESSERT

Floral Milk Puddings

Gather Victoria

According to folklore, faeries love to hear the tinkling of bells, so much so that they can be conjured by a single one ringing. So go ahead, invite the fae into your kitchen—with these puddings they'll be sure to send some magical faerie dust your way!

MOLDED FAERIE DESSERT

(scented with violet or rose)

3 cups whole milk (or half and half cream)
½ cup heavy cream
¼ cup violet liqueur or violet syrup (or 2 tablespoons of rose water)
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
A few drops of violet or red food coloring (optional)
1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons unflavored gelatin

In a medium saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup milk. Sprinkle gelatin over top. Let stand until softened, about 5 minutes.

Gently heat gelatin, milk, and cream mixture over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally until gelatin is dissolved, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile fill a decorative mold (4-to-4½-cup or two 2-to-2½-cup molds) with ice water. Let sit to chill.

Remove the gelatin and milk mixture from heat. Pour into a large bowl and add the remaining milk, then stir in your violet syrup or Violette liqueur. Add a touch of food coloring if you wish.

Empty the ice water from your mold but do not dry it. (This makes the pudding easier to unmold later). Pour your mixture into your mold. Refrigerate until firm, about 6 hours or overnight.

GOLDEN LEMON FAERIE PUDDING

2 cups whole milk (or half and half cream)
1½ cups heavy cream
2 tablespoons grated lemon rind
1 teaspoon (approximately) of turmeric
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons unflavored gelatin
2 tablespoons of lemon juice
Dash of ground nutmeg

In a medium saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup milk. Sprinkle gelatin over top; let stand until softened, 5 minutes.

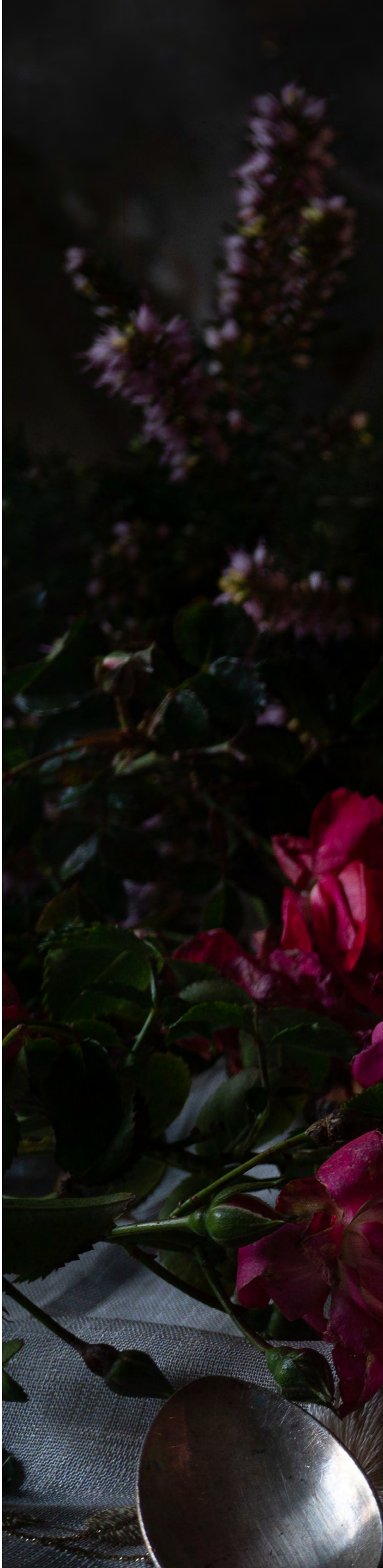
Heat milk and cream mixture over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally until gelatin is dissolved, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, fill a 4-to-4½-cup mold or two 2-to-2½-cup molds with ice water. Let sit to chill.

Remove milk, cream, and gelatin mixture from heat and place in a large bowl. Stir in remaining cups of milk, lemon rind and juice, and turmeric. Remove the ice water from the mold but do not dry it. Pour your mixture into your mold. Refrigerate until firm, about 6 hours or overnight.

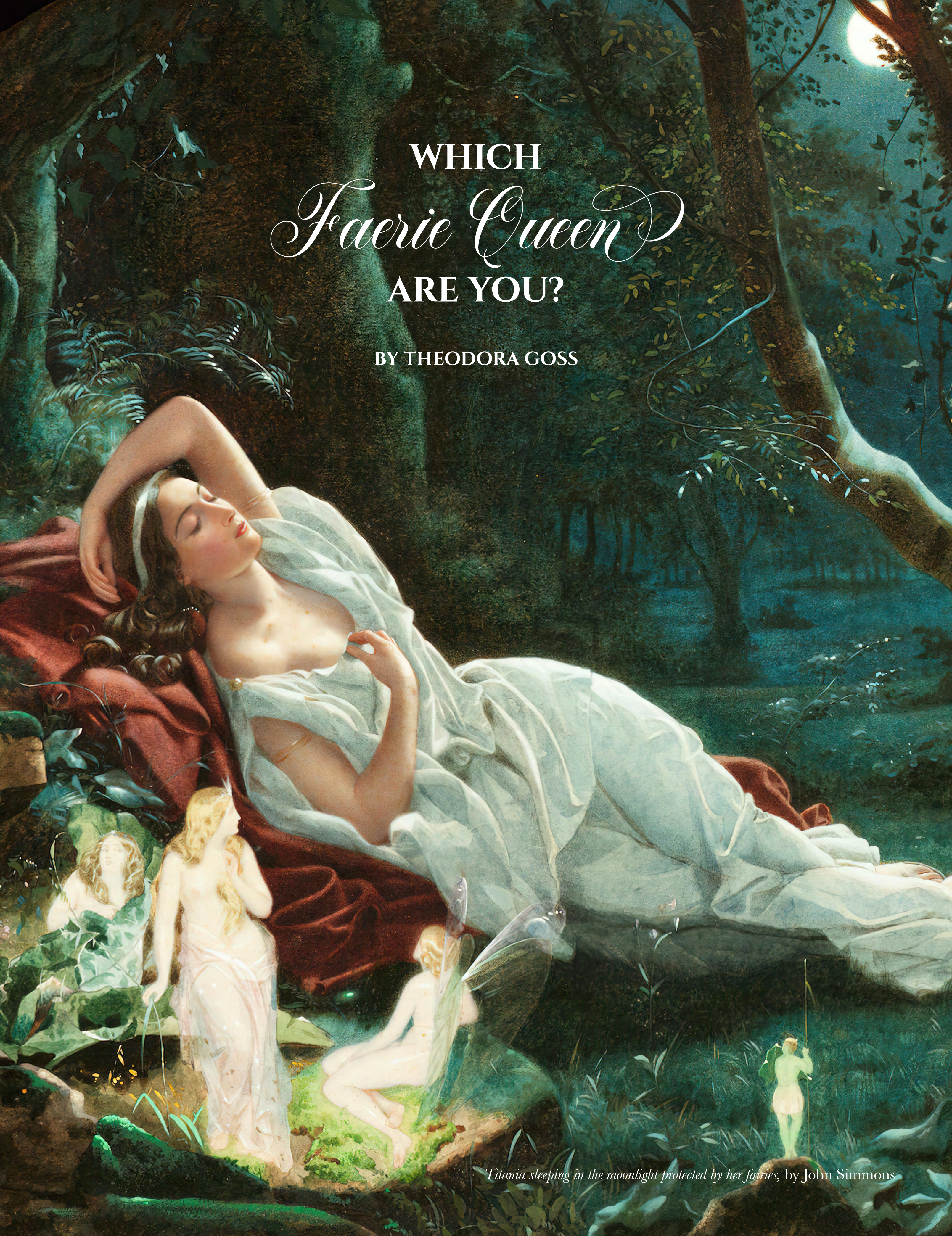
To unmold, quickly dip mold into a hot-water bath to loosen pudding from mold. Place a serving platter over mold and quickly invert. Jiggle to loosen; remove mold. Sprinkle with ground nutmeg to serve.

Follow Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria) on her blog at gathervictoria.com.



WHICH *Faerie Queen* ARE YOU?

BY THEODORA GOSS



Titania sleeping in the moonlight protected by her fairies, by John Simmons

When Thomas the Rhymer sees the Queen of Elfland riding past the Eildon tree, he hails her as "Mary, Queen of Heaven! / For thy peer on earth I never did see." You can see why he is awestruck by her beauty:

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett o' her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

He lives with her for seven years in fairyland and gains the ability to speak only the truth, which means to prophesy—sometimes the faeries give such gifts.

But Tam Lin, who is whisked away by the "Queen o' Fairies" to "yon green hill" after he falls from his horse while hunting, begs Fair Janet to save him, for he is about to become a human sacrifice:

And pleasant is the fairy land
For those that in it dwell,
But ay at end of seven years
They pay a teind to hell;
I am sae fair and fu' o' flesh
I'm fear'd 'twill be mysell.

When the queen finds out that Janet has stolen Tam Lin away from her, she wishes that she had taken out his heart of flesh and put in one of stone, taken his bonny gray eyes and substituted wood.

Who is this mysterious faerie queen, who both gives gifts and demands such fearful loyalty? Perhaps she is not one woman at all, and there are as many faerie queens are there are fairylands. It certainly seems so from literature. Shakespeare himself has given us two very different faerie queens in Mab and Titania.

Let's explore some of these literary faerie queens, all fascinating in their different ways. And ask yourself, which do you resemble? If you were a queen of Elfland, what would you be like?

QUEEN TITANIA

We could start by asking, how tempestuous are you? Titania is tempestuous indeed, and her consort Oberon plays a cruel trick on her in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when he makes her fall in love with weaver and wannabe actor Nick Bottom, who's been given the head of a donkey by that trickster, Puck. Oberon's first words to her, "Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania," announce his displeasure and tell us a little about her temperament. But she responds that he's simply jealous, and she may be right—Titania is, after all, a glamorous beauty with definite opinions of her own, an equal ruler of fairyland who does not hesitate to challenge the faerie king..

If you know what you want and are outspoken about it, if you aren't afraid to stand up for your beliefs, if you stride or fly through the world as though you know where you're going, you may be a Titania (perhaps with flaming red hair or another signature attribute that separates you from the crowd). Oberon and his queen are reconciled at the end of the play when she agrees to give him a changeling boy in her retinue to be his knight, but personally, I don't think their détente will last for long. If you're a Titania, own your opinions and your style—be as flamboyant as you want to be. After all, you're a *queen*.

QUEEN MAB

In Mab, Shakespeare gives us a very different kind of faerie queen. She is described by Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* as tiny and tricksy: "She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes / In shape no bigger than an agate-stone / On the fore-finger of an alderman." Her chariot is made from a hazelnut shell, and she drives it while we are asleep, giving us our nightly dreams. Lovers dream of love, lawyers dream of their fees, soldiers dream of cutting their enemies' throats. As she passes, she "plaits the manes of horses in the night, / And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs, / Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes." She seems to have ridden through our literature as well, appearing in places as different as Susanna Clarke's short-story collection *The Ladies of Grade Adieu* and Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* graphic novels.

Mab is a beautiful little trickster, and perhaps you are too. If you like to think up practical jokes, if you can't help being a bit wry and sarcastic, if you have a slightly wicked sense of humor, you may well be a Mab. Of all the faerie queens, she is perhaps the most gamine. I imagine her with a cute bob, a sly smile, and an "I dare you" expression under an outrageous hat. If you're a Mab, harness your hazelnut carriage and go riding—remember that you are the creator of dreams.

QUEEN NIAMH

From Shakespeare, we go back in time to the origin of faerie queens in Irish mythology. The story of Niamh, also known as Niamh Cinn Óir or Niamh of the Golden Hair, is told in a poem by the Irish poet Mícheál Coimín. She was a daughter of the king of Tir na nÓg, the Land of Youth—sometimes it is said that her father was the sea god Manannán mac Lir. One day, she rode her horse over the sea to Ireland, where she met the warrior poet Oisín, son of Fionn Mac Cumhail. He fell in love with her and followed her back to Tir na nÓg, living there with her for three hundred years before he began to get homesick for his own country. She told him that he could return to Ireland as long as he never dismounted from his horse. But when he saw several men trying to move a stone that he knew his great strength could easily lift, Oisín had to help. Unfortunately, as he leaned down to lift the stone, his horse's saddle girth broke and he fell to the ground. Instantly, he turned into an old man, and he never saw Niamh again.

W.B. Yeats retells the story of Niamh in his epic poem *The Wanderings of Oisin* and mentions her in "The Hosting of the Sidhe" as part of a faerie band that will take you away from the ordinary world: If you listen closely, you can hear "Niamh calling Away, come away: / Empty your heart of its mortal dream." But perhaps the best description of Niamh is found in Ethna Carbery's poem of the same name:

Oh, who is she, and what is she?
A beauty born eternally
Of shimmering moonshine, sunset flame,
And rose-red heart of dawn;
None knows the secret ways she came—
Whither she journeys on.

Niamh is the most otherworldly of the faerie queens. Whatever the color of your hair, if you look as though you came from somewhere else and are never quite here—if you are just a bit ethereal (maybe even absentminded), you may be a Niamh. I imagine her as the sort of person who knows that her home is elsewhere, who hears faerie bells in the distance or dances to the music of an invisible orchestra—perhaps the Sidhe as they pass by.

QUEEN MORGAN

Morgan le Fay is the goth girl of faerie queens. In early versions of the Arthurian legends, such as the *Vita Merlini* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, she is described as a healer who lives on the Island of Avalon. When King Arthur is wounded by Mordred in the Battle of Camlann, she accepts him as her patient. Only later does she become an important antagonist for the knights of the Round Table, taking on a darker role as a sorceress and Arthur's half-sister. By the time Sir Thomas Malory wrote *Le Morte d'Arthur*, Morgan had become wholly evil, a practitioner of necromancy and other dark arts bent on destroying the goodness and purity of Camelot. However, she still retained traces of her former identity—she is mentioned as one of the grieving queens who comes in a funeral boat to carry the wounded Arthur to Avalon.

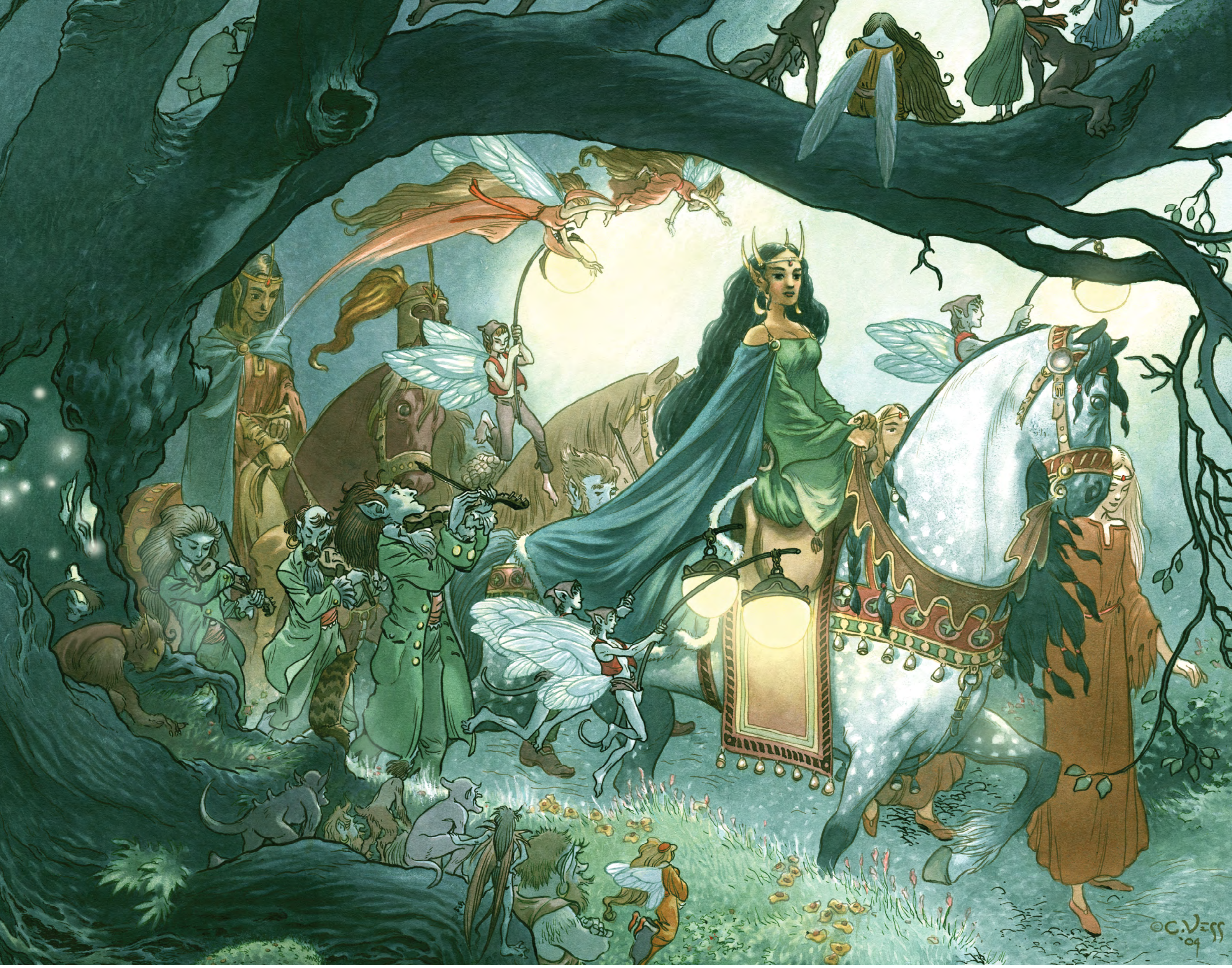
Of all the faerie queens, Morgan has appeared most often in modern literature, including T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*, where the young Wart (who will someday become Arthur) must enter her castle to rescue his companions. This Morgan le Fay is presented humorously, in a faerie castle made of food meant to tempt Wart, but she is nevertheless a force to be reckoned with. When Wart confronts her with iron, she orders her pet griffin to attack him. Later in the book, she is described as one of three beautiful sisters, daughters of the Earl of Cornwall, who are all witches. The knights of the Round Table must deal with the machinations of both Morgan and her sister Morgause, the mother of Arthur's heir and usurper Mordred. With this tangled history, it's no wonder that modern writers have presented her as a seductive, dangerous woman. In the Marvel universe, she has even become a supervillainess who fights with Dr. Doom against Iron Man.

Morgan may also be one of the oldest faerie queens. She has been connected with the shape-shifting Morrígan, an Irish goddess of war and fate who can also appear as three sisters. If you would choose bat wings over those of a butterfly, if you are drawn to twilight rather than morning, if you like candles and pentacles, flowing black dresses and raven tresses, or the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe, you may be a Morgan. If so, enjoy your darkness. As the poet Goethe pointed out, it is the birthplace of light, and if Morgan is a necromancer, she is also the healing priestess of Avalon.

Companions to the Moon, 2004, by Charles Vess

QUEEN GALADRIEL

Galadriel is the epitome of what we might now consider a faerie queen: beautiful, noble, wise, and gracious. In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, she is the ruler, with her husband Celeborn, of the sunlit Forest of Lothlórien. In contrast with the proud, temperamental Titania, the trickster Mab, and the darker aspects of Morgan le Fay, she represents Tolkien's attempt to return to an older, more noble conception of the faerie queen. She resembles the Irish Tuatha Dé Danann, who are gods turned faeries, like Niamh. However, while Niamh lives in a magical land across the sea, Galadriel lives in our world and participates in the attempt to save it. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, she gives Frodo and his companions food and a safe place to rest



on their perilous journey. When he offers her the One Ring, she is briefly tempted, but her goodness is stronger than her desire for power—she knows the ring would corrupt her. Like the more positive aspect of Morgan, she is a healer who helps Gandalf when he has been wounded.

The experience of meeting such a faerie queen is described in Tolkien's short story "Smith of Wootton Major," where Smith, who has been granted the ability to travel in fairyland, finally meets its ruler: "There he was brought before the Queen herself. She wore no crown and had no throne. She stood there in her majesty and her glory, and all about her was a great host shimmering and glittering like the stars above; but she was taller than the points of their great spears, and upon her head there burned a white flame."

This is a glorious vision worthy of Galadriel. You would have to be quite a splendid person to be this faerie queen! But after the Lady of Lothlórien refuses to be tempted by the One Ring, Frodo sees her simply as an elf-woman in a white dress, with a sad, gentle voice, who has renounced ultimate power. Galadriel's superpower is, in the end, knowing her own limitations. That is a faerie quality we can all relate to.

Most of the faerie queens we find in old ballads and stories have no names—at least none that we know of. They are the queens of magical countries, whether inside hills, under lakes, or right around the corner. Some are kind, helping unfortunate goose girls and rewarding brave knights. Some are unpredictable, a few downright wicked. But like Titania, Mab, Niamh, Morgan, and Galadriel, they are all different—there are as many faerie queens as there are fairylands, and those are innumerable.

To the extent such lands exist in the imagination, every woman is the queen of a magical country that she can visit by closing her eyes and dreaming, as though Mab had dusted her eyelids with faerie dust.

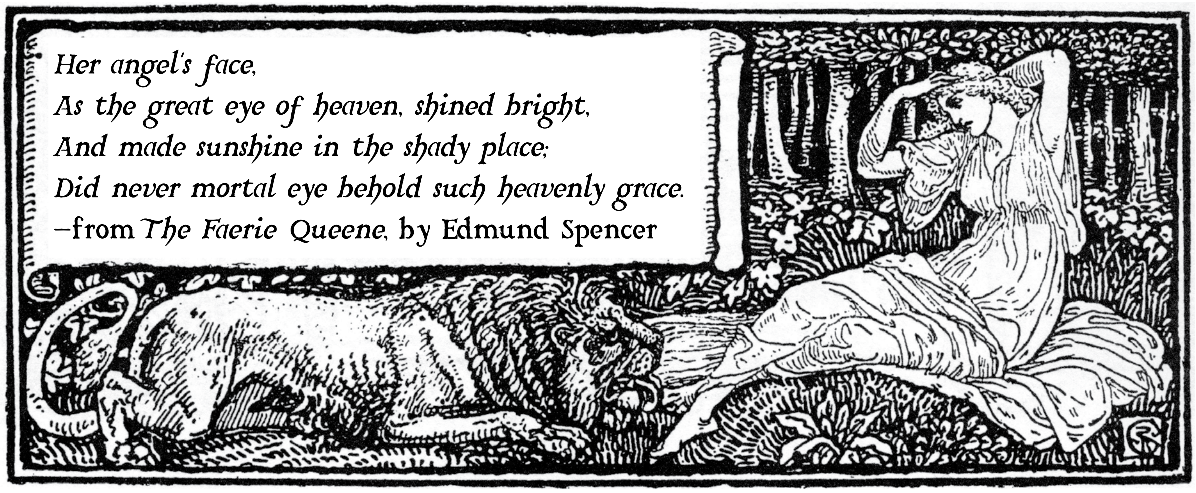
◆

Follow Theodora Goss on Instagram @theodoragoss.

Titania

AN ALLURING PERFUME OIL

BY SUSAN ILKA TUTTLE
(A.K.A. WHISPER IN THE WOOD)



Her angel's face,
As the great eye of heaven, shined bright,
And made sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.
—from *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spencer

The faerie queen's origins can be traced to tales that run through Irish and British folklore. This bedazzling creature rules over the fae entities that reside in the woodland realm, among delicate, fragrant blooms in gardens and meadows, and in countless other resplendent places of natural beauty. Those intrigued and enchanted by these otherworldly beings—and especially those who are also lovers of art, literature, and classical music—will recognize Shakespeare's Titania from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as an embodiment of the archetype of the faerie queen. Titania inspired future incarnations of the queen of the fae, most notably Edmund Spenser's 1590 epic poem *The Faerie Queene,* which presents her as Gloriana, a descendant of Titania. Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem "The Lady of Shalott" (1842) drew inspiration in part from Spenser's poem, which in turn inspired John William Waterhouse's exquisite painting *The Lady of Shalott* (1888). The faerie queen is brought to life in the form of mellifluous music by Baroque composer Henry Purcell in his opera *The Fairy Queen* (1692), an adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The queen of the fae has made further appearances in visual art throughout the ages, notably in Henry Fuseli's *Prince Arthur and the Fairy Queen* (c. 1877) and the neoclassical work *Midsummer Eve* by Edward Robert Hughes (1908).

Titania and all her manifestations are intimately linked to the natural world. She affects the weather and has sway over the seasons, which reflect her every emotion and move. Titania's energy is independent, strong-willed, determined, free-spirited, sassy, feminist, and feisty. While she is a gracious and compassionate being, Titania can be wild, impatient, and surprisingly fierce due to her fae nature. As the most powerful spirit of the faerie realm, she is arguably a beguiling sorceress—a force to be reckoned with in the world of magic.

The art of perfumery is a passion of mine and a medium through which I like to capture, honor, and celebrate facets of life, experience, love, art, nature, and spirit. One such perfume oil I have created especially for *Enchanted Living* readers is called *Titania:* a hand-crafted fragrance that embodies the allure of the faerie queen and the mystical, captivating, and magical world of the fae. The initial impression imparted by the perfume's top note swirls with fruity blackberry while the heart of the blend swells with a fresh and woodsy balsam fir, reminiscent of the deep forest where the fae reside. These facets of the fragrance dance with base notes of earthy cedarwood, musky and honey-like amber, and sweet, warm vanilla. These deeper, rich scents will be fully enjoyed during the dry-down period of the scent, when the heart and lighter top notes will have softened and then vanished.

Not only will the accord of these delicious aromas blended together transport you to the land of the fae; the oils used will impart their inherent magical properties to the wearer of the scent …

- *Cedarwood:* healing, abundance, wisdom, cleansing negative energies
- *Amber:* a balm for the nerves and the spirit; a magnet for good luck; for harmonizing, soothing fears, and converting negative energy to positive
- *Vanilla:* inner peace and calm, love, happiness, luck
- *Balsam Fir:* provides strength, cleanses negativity, and fosters a powerful connection to the natural world
- *Blackberry:* healing, money, protection, and it makes a wonderful offering for the fae

This perfume oil blend consists of high-quality, therapeutic-grade essential oils, blackberry fragrance oil made for crafting perfumes, and two carrier oils—fractionated coconut oil and jojoba oil (actually a wax ester), both of which absorb quickly into the skin, leaving it velvety soft and without a greasy film. I recommend making 10 millimeters of the perfume oil, which can be easily and conveniently crafted in a glass roller bottle. For everyday safe use, combine 10 to 12 drops of essential oil with your carrier oils in the vessel. You might wish to use a more decadent type of bottle to hold your creation. I enjoy placing my hand-crafted scents in vintage French perfume bottles.

Titania Perfume Oil

Susan Ilka Tuttle

I invite you to create an entire sensual experience for yourself when crafting this perfume oil. Enjoy the ritual of making the fragrance slowly and with intention, and in doing so you will infuse your own spirit into the potion, making it that much more vibrationally potent and special.

If concocting it indoors, set up a sacred space for yourself. Light candles, read a passage from *The Faerie Queene*, and play Purcell's opera *The Fairy Queen* softly in the background. Or gather your supplies and wander into the forest, garden, or nearby park. Find a private spot where you can create your perfume blend among the sounds, scents, and sensations of the natural world. Invite the fae spirits to join you in your ritual, connecting and merging with the magical energies all around you, of which you are a part. These woodland sprites may even decide to infuse some of their magic into the perfume. Be sure to leave an offering for them to show your appreciation and thanks—perhaps anoint a crystal with your fae-inspired perfume to give them as a gift. Nature spirits especially love blackberry (contained in this fragrance), which has traditionally been given to them as an offering.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

10-millimeter glass roller bottle
Perfume pipettes and a mini funnel for filling perfume bottles
Essential oils of cedarwood, amber, vanilla, and balsam fir
Blackberry fragrance oil
Fractionated coconut oil and/or jojoba oil

HOW TO MAKE:

I recommend working on a surface that you can easily wipe clean, as working with these oils can be a bit messy. I simply cover a piece of cardboard with tin foil, which can be wiped clean and used multiple times. Some 10-millimeter bottles come with the roller ball in place. If so, you will need to remove it first. Place your funnel in the bottle and add a small amount of carrier oil (either fractionated coconut oil, jojoba oil, or a blend of the two).

Add drops of essential oil and fragrance oil in the following amounts:

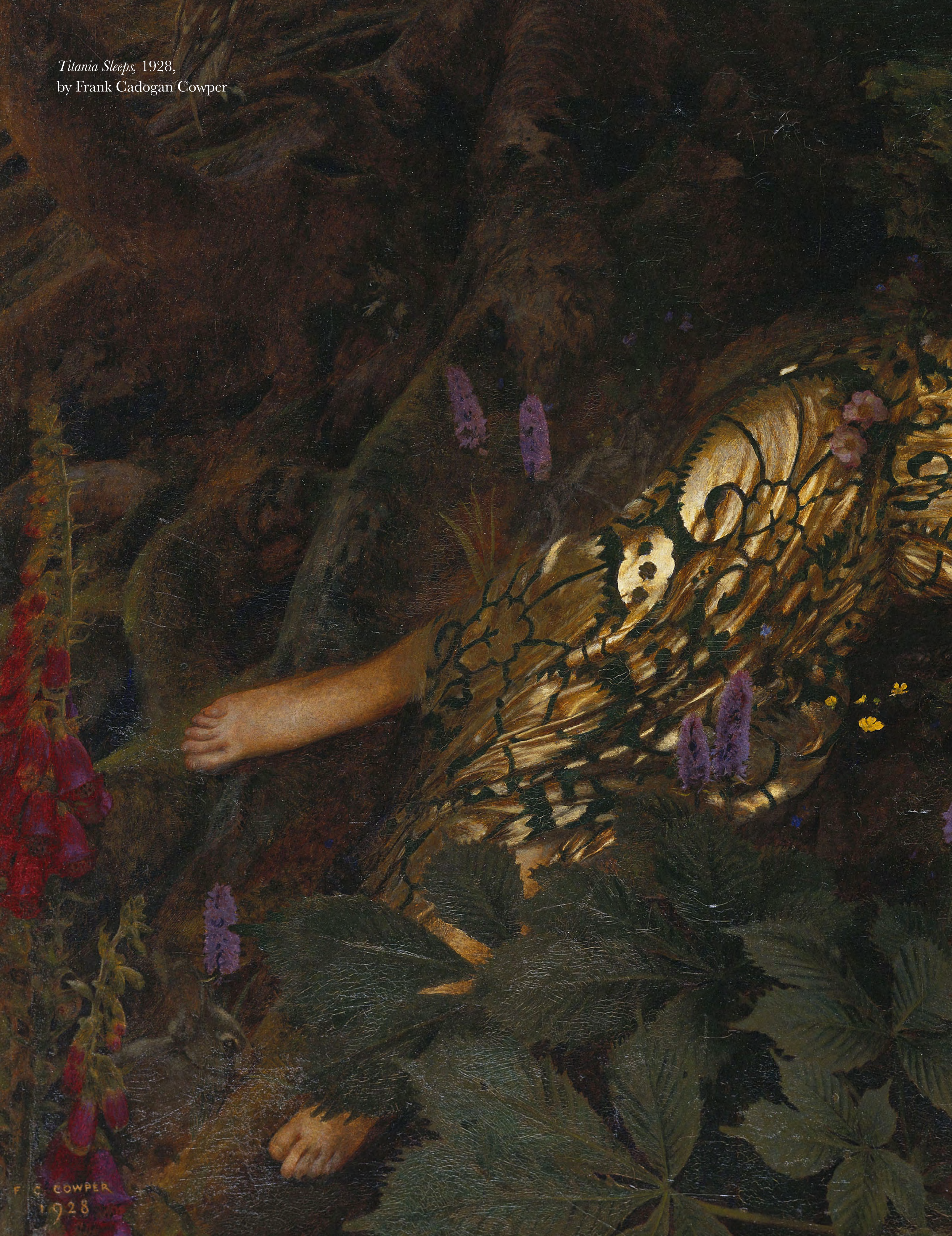
Cedarwood: 1
Amber: 1
Vanilla: 1
Balsam Fir: 5
Blackberry fragrance oil: 3

Add more carrier oil, filling your bottle to the top. Press the roller ball in place. Cap it. Shake to blend. As you apply this alluring perfume oil to your sacred vessel on pulse points, allow it to remind you of the beauty and magic that resides within you and in the natural world of which you are a part.

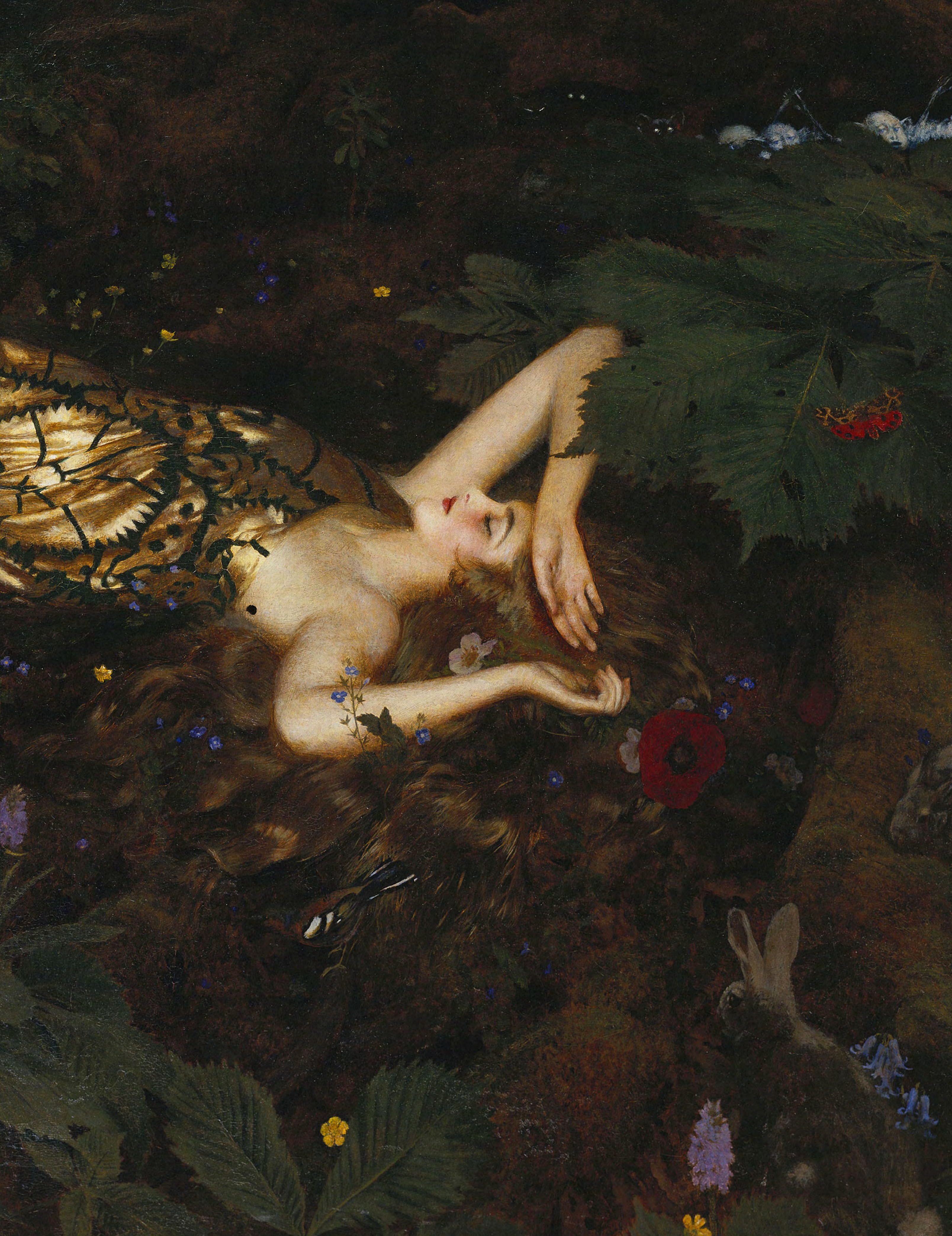
Safety Note: It is important to consult with a qualified health care practitioner before using essential oils, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, have any medical conditions, or are taking any medications (prescription or over-the-counter), or if you have food or plant allergies.

Susan Ilka Tuttle is an herbalist, green witch, artist, psychic medium and spirit messenger, and writer living in the woods of Maine. She is the author of the book Green Witch Magick: Essential Plants and Crafty Spellwork for a Witch's Cupboard, *which will be released in September 2021 and is available for preorder through Amazon, IndieBound, and Barnes & Noble. Visit her shop at inthewoodbotanicals.com, learn more about her spirit mediumship offerings at susantuttlespiritmessenger.com, and follow her on Instagram @whisper_in_the_wood.*

Photography by LILLIAN LIU
Model THERESA FRACTALE
Dress + Headpiece LINDA FRIESEN
Hair REMY DUPONT
Makeup MARIE-LUCE GOLNEZ


F. C. COWPER
1928

Titania Sleeps, 1928,
by Frank Cadogan Cowper



Find Your Inner Faerie Queen

by The Wondersmith

Have you ever felt like your appearance or physical limitations prevent you from looking or feeling magical? I want you to know that you already *are* magical, and you are absolutely allowed to express that part of yourself, no matter what. Representation is *so* important, and everyone deserves to feel like a faerie queen if they want to! If you look a little different, take heart, dear one. There is space for you to be just as magical as your soul is.

I have a chronic health condition that makes it difficult for me to get enough calories, so my doctor and I decided it was time for a feeding tube. Getting it was an emotional process, especially since I've only ever seen images of feeding tubes taken in hospitals and certainly never as part of a glamorous photo shoot. I wanted to show myself and others that it's absolutely possible to feel beautiful with a visible health aid device, so I asked my father and my sweetheart to help me with a photo shoot in the garden of a good friend. (Thank you Kaden!)

We worked collaboratively one early evening among the flowers, playing with poses and shooting techniques, and I kept tearing up as I was editing the photos because I knew these radiant, happy images would displace the vision of "sick person" that I'd been seeing in the mirror since I had the tube installed. I felt absolutely magical.

The response to those photos had me in tears too—so many people were messaging me to say that they also had a feeding tube or other visible health device and had never seen representation like this before. Many told me that they felt like they had to hide, that their visible illness made people too uncomfortable, so they purposefully isolated themselves. How heartbreaking! I truly believe that this community is capable of seeing past the devices and into the magic each person carries within. You are welcome here, exactly as you are.

While I've moved on to a PICC line for nutrition, a less visible health aid, I still rely on mobility aids and other things that provide visible signs of my illness. I've made a promise to myself to not let that hold me back from expressing myself however I want to. It's delightful to don a flower crown when I go out in my wheelchair or to decorate the armband that covers my PICC line with flowers. I do it for me, and I do it so that anyone who sees me knows it's possible to feel beautiful and magical no matter your limitations.

Ways To Feel Like a Faerie Queen

- Don a flower crown. You can make it yourself or buy a ready-made version! No matter the day or season, a flower crown always makes me feel absolutely magical. If you have allergies or sensitivities, artificial flower crowns are just as magical!
- Highlight your mobility aid. I remember when I first got a wheelchair, I was really self-conscious about it. My best friend came over and painted it purple for me! Before the pandemic, she'd take me on walks in my chair, and I got loads of compliments on it. Instead of trying not to draw attention to yourself, celebrate the things that give you a higher quality of life. That wheelchair allowed me to get out into nature rather than staying stuck in my bed all the time. That was definitely worthy of celebration!
- Decorate your health aid. Put a pretty sticker over your feeding tube. Paint butterflies on your cast. Attach a little flower to your hearing aids, or hang strings of beads from your glasses. Fill your life with beauty—even the parts that might not feel beautiful at first.
- Remember that your flaws *aren't*. Seek out role models who have the same or similar conditions as you and allow yourself to see them as magical, so that you can see that in yourself too. Highlight your vitiligo. Draw flowers around your moles. Look for shapes and constellations in your scars, like you would find in the clouds above. Notice how your body mimics beautiful patterns found in nature.
- Ask for help. If you don't have the energy or ability to dress up as the faerie royalty you are, see if a friend will come help you!
- Embrace beautiful scents. A little floral perfume or essential oils nearby can instantly transport me to fairyland. You deserve the pleasure of smelling something lovely, whether you wear it for others to enjoy too or not.
- Know that nobody has to witness your magic for it to be real. I still sometimes put on sparkly makeup and a crown when I'm confined to my bed, even though nobody else will see me. It makes me feel magical, and that is reason enough.
- Remind yourself that you are worthy of feeling special. It can be hard to get past the blocks of insecurity that come from visible disabilities or health conditions, but you are just as magical and worthy as anyone else. Remind yourself of that from time to time. You deserve magic because you *are* magic.

BREWING PERIDOT

The Pacific Northwest version of Chartreuse

A mysterious green liquor sparkling with clarity and infused with the healing powers of over a hundred different herbs—it sounds like a potion out of a fairy tale, but it's a liquor known all over the world by the name Chartreuse. This sweet and herbal libation is mysteriously brewed by Carthusian monks in the mountains of France.

BY THE WONDERSMITH

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED

An assortment of fresh and dried herbs and botanicals (see notes below)

- Soft herbs: lemon balm, wild mint, hyssop, angelica, pineapple weed, elderflower, rose petals, violet leaves and flowers, sweet cicely leaves, thimbleberry leaves, alfalfa, bee balm, crabapple flowers, plum blossoms, clover, wild strawberry leaves and flowers, yarrow leaves and flowers, mallow leaves, wild hops, cleavers, wild ginger, spearmint, peppermint, lemon verbena, fennel, thyme, sage, chamomile, bay, lemongrass, basil, rosemary, etc.
- Whole spices: juniper berries, pine needles, cottonwood buds, aspen buds, usnea, licorice fern rhizome, cloves, nutmeg, star anise, cinnamon, saffron, allspice, mace, etc.
- Citrus peels (the thin outer zest only)
- High-proof vodka (Pick something with a smooth finish; you don't want the bottom shelf option as the harshness of low-quality vodka will overtake your artful blend!)
- Sweetener of choice—I prefer honey or a simple sugar syrup

As you gather your herbs, spices, and other botanicals, divide them into two sections: hardy varieties that can withstand more soaking and tender varieties that will infuse very quickly (such as fresh herbs and flowers).

Divide your vodka into quarters. In one quarter, you will infuse the more hardy whole spices. Fill a small jar about a quarter of the way and then cover the rest of the way with vodka. Leave for a few days, smelling every day. When it smells good, it's ready. Don't infuse longer than a week.

Infuse the citrus peels in the other three-quarters of your vodka blend. Again, it is to taste, so use as much or as little as you'd like. Let sit for a day or two, then strain, discarding the citrus peels.

Wash and dry your herbs thoroughly. Assess them and create a balanced blend from what you have. Stronger herbs (such as sagebrush, mugwort, wormwood, thyme, or rosemary) should be used sparingly, while sweeter herbs (such as mint, lemon balm, fennel, or hyssop) can be used in greater amounts. Floral flavors (like wild rose and elderflower) can be added in fairly high amounts; since their flavors are more subtle, you'll need more of them to shine through in the finished blend.

Once you've created a balanced herbal blend you are happy with, place it in a big jar and cover with the citrus-infused vodka. Tender green botanicals tend to infuse fairly quickly; let the vodka sit somewhere warmish for five to six hours, then take a small sample. If it tastes wonderful, you're done. If you feel it could use a bit longer, let it continue to infuse, tasting every hour or two. Do not infuse longer than 24 hours.

Strain your herbal blend and pour a small bit into a glass. Add a few drops of the first spice-based infusion and taste. You want to add some complexity to your herbal blend without overwhelming it with the stronger spice blend, so test proportions until you find the sweet spot. Then add your spice blend to your herbal blend slowly until you have achieved that balance.

To turn your tincture into a true liquor, you'll need to sweeten it. Add honey or simple syrup to taste—around one part sweetener to three parts alcohol is a good starting point, then add more sweetener if desired.

Serve chilled as an after-dinner digestive, or before your feast as an aperitif. This blend will change with aging, so enjoy it within a few months if you'd like to preserve the flavor! It can sometimes age really nicely, though, so if you have a bit left over in the fall or winter, it makes a lovely evening treat then as well.

A final tip: If you want to get this lovely green color, you'll need to add a couple of special ingredients. (Most tinctures turn some sort of tan or brown.) Saffron imparts a lovely golden-yellow color as well as its famous flavor, and butterfly pea flowers give a blue tint with no flavor. Together, they make green. You do not need either to make a delicious brew, but if the presentation of a sparkling green liquor is important to you, this is a good way to get it.

Visit The Wondersmith online at thewondersmith.com.

Faery
Court
Masquerade
Ball

2021 FAERY COURT MASQUERADE BALL
*September 11, 2021 * Biloxi, MS*
For ticket information, please visit
WWW.FAERY-BALL.COM

The Fairies' Banquet by John Anster Fitzgerald. Wikimedia Commons

The CURSE, *the* CURE, *and the* QUEEN

BY BRIANA SAUSSY

"THE CURE IS IN THE CURSE."

Magic in the 21st century has undergone many fantastic changes and evolutions, but its most ancient face still appears in a few discreet patterns that hold their shape across time and place. This statement is perhaps one of the oldest shapes of all, the understanding that every cure we seek lies hidden at the root of each curse we endure. I learned this truism at the knee of the storytellers in my own family, grandparents and a great grandmother who told it to me in a hundred different tales and a thousand different ways. And then I learned it in the various magical traditions I trained in, practice, and teach today. This notion that the cure is in the curse is not a rationalization for why you might become ill or why your lover has suddenly up and left. Rather it is an observation often made with a cold eye and in a nonjudgmental manner. It is not about what is right or wrong or easy or hard but a plain fact staring you in the face, if you are willing and able to pay attention. And it has ramifications that shape our stories both on and off the page.

Take the ballad of Tam Lin, a Scottish ballad that dates back to 1549 in written form but deals with motifs and story lines that are much, much older. Tam Lin deals frankly in curses. The core of the tale is straightforward: A young girl (Janet) falls in love with mysterious handsome knight (Tam Lin), discovers that she is pregnant with his child, then discovers he has actually been held (against his will?) by the faerie queen. To free him so that they may live happily ever after, she must pass a test. In this case the test is Tam Lin changing forms from an adder to a toad to a lion, wolf, bear, and piece of hot burning lead. The young girl completes her task admirably and wins the knight back from the faerie queen, who is none too pleased with the events but nevertheless accepts them.

Tam Lin is riddled with curses. This is immediately apparent in the way it is most commonly told in modern times. My paternal grandfather, a staunch Catholic with a good deal of Scottish heritage, first told me the tale of Tam Lin, and he told it to me, I imagine, much as it had been told to him, as a warning not to meddle too much in the business of faeries and not to wander too far into the woods, especially as a young person, and not to draw unwanted attention to oneself. I was struck then, as I am every time I encounter the story anew, by how transgressive the tale is on so many levels, centering on a fiercely independent woman who does the saving instead of becoming the saved. Hanging in the background of the tale is the warning—take care or you too will draw the ire of the faerie queen, take care or you too will feel her curse.

But what is the curse exactly? In the story of Tam Lin, one would be hard pressed to pick just one. Tam Lin the knight is cursed when he draws the attention of the faerie queen and is taken captive in her court … or is he? The nature of their relationship is unclear, although apparently sexual, and he has been with her a long time—seven years. Janet sees her unborn child as a curse and takes action to rid herself of it as she sees no other alternative. Tam Lin is cursed again as he understands that he is about to be offered up as part of the faerie court's payment to hell. The lovers are cursed, and Janet must accomplish the most difficult of tasks—remaining constant in the face of violent and unceasing change—to win her beloved back.

And then the story, which climaxes with Janet's success and Tam Lin's final transformation back into his rightful shape as a mortal man, ends with a curse uttered by the faerie queen herself:

"But had I kend, Tam Lin," said she,
"What now this night I see,
I wad hae taen out thy twa grey een,
And put in twa een o tree."

These words mark the end of most traditional renditions of the ballad and give us a unique kind of curse, a speculative curse perhaps, one that is structured as a syllogism: *If* I had known then, I would have …

Returning to our opening premise, if there is a possibility of a curse then there is also the possibility of a cure. But what is the ailment here? What is the needed cure?

To answer this we need to go back to the beginnings of the tale, into the woods. For it is here in the woods where Janet first encounters the handsome fae knight while she is doing something very particular: picking roses, double roses to be precise, and "breaking their wands"—i.e., breaking or cutting their stems. Moreover, when Tam Lin appears and asks her why she is doing this, she claims that the land belongs to her.

It is easy to see how the warp and weft are coming together in this particular pattern. Janet is not a bad person; indeed throughout the ballad she is shown to be brave, strong, and somewhat wise. But she is young, untried, and unseasoned in this opening scene. She is selfish. She is claiming ownership of the land and the right to pick the flowers no matter what or whom it may hurt. But the land was understood to have guardians of a much more ancient nature. The land was understood by the people at this time much as it is still understood by indigenous people today world over, to be animate, living, or rather to be a collection of living beings—each with their own intelligence, perception, and feeling.

Long before they were winged miniature confections, faeries were themselves forces of nature and a living presence in the land. In one of the most popular origin stories about faeries, it is said that they are the angels who could not decide what side to take when the devil challenged God and was subsequently cast out of heaven. There were angels who were on the devil's side and angels that could not make up their mind which side to take. These angels were also cast out, also fallen, but fallen onto and into the earth, where they became faeries, genius loci—local spirits inhabiting everything from old oak trees to holy healing wells to windswept mountainsides. And while angels are divided into lesser and "arch" angels, in the faerie realm what we have are kings and most especially queens.

There are different faerie queens in different tales, but in Tam Lin the faerie queen is closely tied to the land. She may be the living, liminal expression of the land itself. How do we know? Tam Lin is a member of her court, and he appears only when Janet shows up and is defiling the land or (in the latter part of the ballad) seeking to remove the evidence of her own fertility—a quality in men and women that is traditionally closely tied to the health of the land. This tells us that the faerie queen's court is activated, its attention drawn, when the land and the people on it are in some kind of duress.

Though Tam Lin is the emissary from the faerie realm that actually encounters Janet, I have always been struck by the fact that he was able to leave the faerie court in the first place. Ostensibly he would need the queen's permission to do that, just as the queen or king would need to be the ones to tell him what needed to happen for his curse to be broken and freedom won. Could it be that the faerie queen in Tam Lin is less concerned with malevolence and more concerned with teaching something essential?

Which brings us to her curse. In old stories, curses are taken literally. If you are cursed to never have a child live long enough to have it baptized, then you make a baby doll, bring it to church, and baptize it—that breaks the curse. In Tam Lin, the curse that the queen would have placed on the knight at the end of the story would be to lose his gray eyes and have them replaced with the "eyes of a tree." Literally she would have had Tam Lin stop seeing things through the eyes of a man and instead see things through the "eyes" or from the perspective of a tree.

And here then is the cure. If and when we are able to put aside our own human perspective for a moment and look at a place with the eyes and from the point of view of the other, nonhuman creatures that dwell there, then indeed a healing can happen. The wound that has left a legacy of seeing both lands and peoples as something to be conquered and divided, the hurt that allows a young girl to rashly proclaim that a forest belongs to her and that she may do whatever she wants in it—these broken beliefs, attitudes, and choices can be mended. They can be healed.

As we noted earlier, the faerie queen does not lay down the final curse; she teases it. And in so doing she offers an invitation not only for the lovers in the tale but for everyone who hears the story as well. Try looking in a different way. Try listening more deeply. Before you pick the roses, consider who and what dwells within them, relies on them, and will be affected by your actions. Before you stake a claim, consider what will happen next.

Every queen owes allegiance to something or someone—be it her country, her people, or her understanding of the divine. The faerie queen's fealty is to the living land itself, and when we listen to a story like Tam Lin, she appears in the long shadows of the trees to remind us that ours is as well.

◆

Find more of Briana Saussy's work at brianasaussy.com.

Fairies in a Bird's Nest by John Anster Fitzgerald. Wikimedia Commons

Tam Lin Remembers THE FAERIE QUEEN

BY THEODORA GOSS

She had eyes like apple seeds.

A small, angular face that reminded me
of a fox's mask. Was it a mask she wore
the whole time I was with her?

The thing about faeries is, they're not like us,
material. Indeed, they most resemble
assemblages constructed from our dreams.
Their visible forms are for our benefit.

Sometimes, as we lay together in bed
under a canopy of spider-silk,
I would turn and find she had become a tree,
branches for arms, a bird's nest between her legs,
with three blue, speckled eggs. Were they our children?
I'd blink, and she would be a woman again,
yawning and stretching as human women do.
She'd smile at me with a fox's sly, wise smile
as though she had tricked me.

The castle was sometimes made of rough gray stone
covered with moss, sometimes of murky water
with fish swimming in the walls. When we danced, the music
came from viols or the buzz of a hundred bees.
I sat on chairs that were either toadstools or clouds,
and ate from plates that stared back up at me,
blinking iridescent eyes. What did I eat there?
Air? Insects? Salads of delicate herbs?
The bread tasted like ashes.

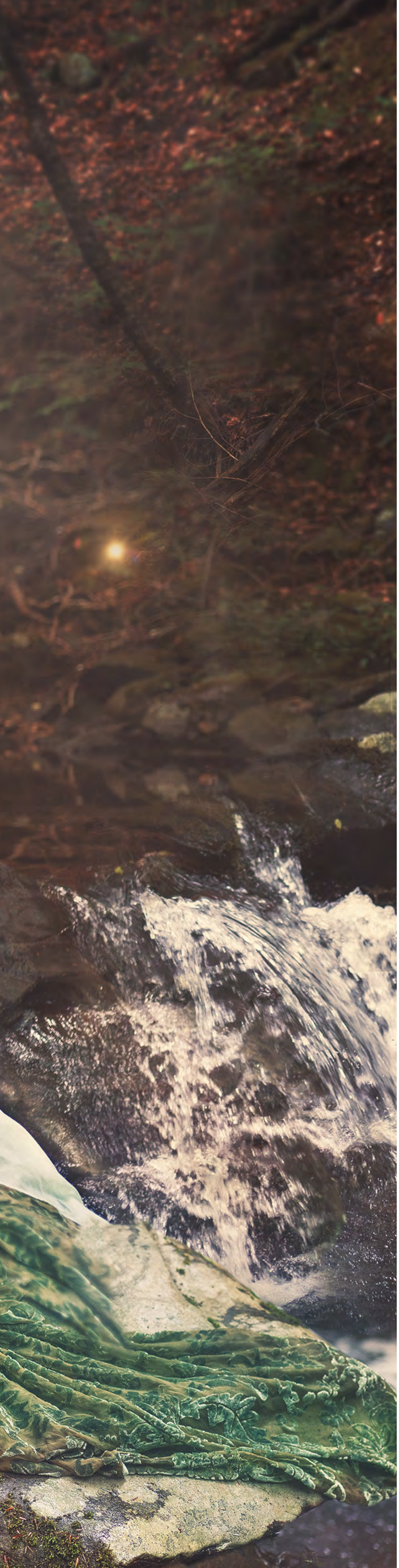
Sometimes she loved me, and we would ride together
on robins, or was it flowering hawthorn branches
whose thorns would prick my legs through leather trousers?
With her strange retinue: the faerie knights
riding on weasels, the goblin standard-bearers
holding thistle spears. They were always half something else,
with the heads of toads or owls, a bat's black wings.
Everything there was always half something else,
except the faerie women, wholly themselves,
and so luminous you had to look at them
through tinted spectacles. It was the fashion
to sew living butterflies unto their shoulders,
so they moved in a halo of colored dust
and panicked flapping.
Awkwardly, at the rear of the procession,
walked a stray cat she had turned into a boy,
who mewed and tried to scratch me.
I was mostly unhappy, but sometimes happy. The problem
is this: I would rather be unhappy in fairyland
than happy elsewhere.

At night, I lie beside a woman who never
turns into a tree, who bears me human children.
And all I can think of is her hard black eyes,
which sometimes looked at me with such disdain,
her small red mouth that never told me the truth
and laughed when I believed her.
That fox's face, which was probably always a mask.

Sometimes I go into the forest alone
and whisper into the hollow knot of an oak:
I'd rather spend an hour in fairyland
than a lifetime elsewhere.
Then I stand in the green silence, with only the cries
of birds, the shush of the oak leaves high above,
and wonder if she's listening.

Faeries of the Forest

BY CAROLYN TURGEON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOY MARSHALL



Faeries of the Forest

Carolyn Turgeon

For last spring's Pre-Raphaelite issue, photographer Joy Marshall, model and artist Tatiana Pimentel, and jeweler Jen Parrish-Hill of Parrish Relics gathered at Parrish-Hills's enchanted Massachusetts abode Frog Hollow for a beautiful Pandora shoot. While there, Parrish-Hill shared with them a beloved image styled by Rebecca Purcell for ABC Carpet & Home of a woman lying in a velvet-strewn bed in the wood, under a chandelier crafted from twigs. Tapestries and blankets hang from fallen limbs. A doll sits on one battered chair, a large black bird on another. Leaves lie scattered over a rug that's decorated with roses.

Marshall was struck by the image's lushness and vibrancy, its sheer gorgeousness, and wanted to return to Frog Hollow to create images in the same vein. And with faeries. Why not with faeries? The three started brainstorming about the upcoming shoot (and asked Courtney Fox-Johns to join in) and started talking about folklore and our favorite queen, Titania—who is, as we all know, the embodiment of glamour, if faeries are in fact embodied—and the suspiciously/aptly named Tatiana tried her hand at making wings for the shoot.

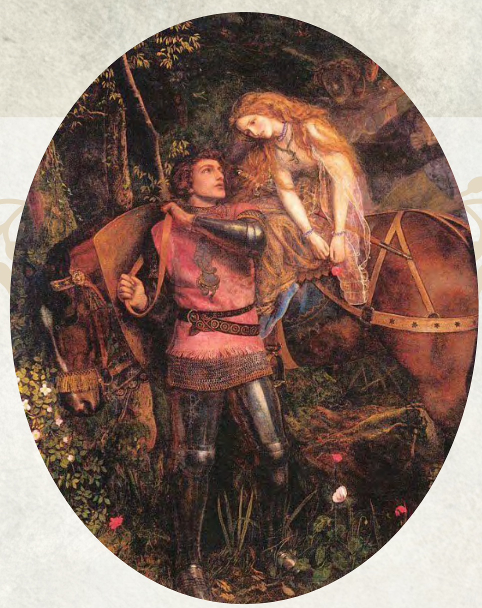
They all gathered on a stormy June day with two cars full of costumes and fabric and pillows to make magic of their own. They'd end up meeting three times, but it was on the first day that a storm passed through, with lightning overhead, fog hovering among the trees, and a strange light streaming down through the branches and reflecting off the water and the models' skin. As the trees started to take on personalities of their own, the group found more and more out-of-the-way spots to shoot in, even lugging props over boulders and fallen branches to get to an especially lovely rock hanging over a stream. The place had a "rare, Tolkien-esque" beauty, Marshall says, "untouched by humans."

We love hearing about this sort of collaboration among faerie sisters, when the weather seems to cooperate and everything aligns. Marshall, Pimentel, and Fox-Johns even met for a day before their second shoot for a marathon crafting session, making crowns and wings and generally sharing ideas and inspiration. And of course every shot featured Parrish-Hill's exquisite handmade jewelry. One happy offshoot of all this improvising and collaboration is Pimentel's new shop, Creatures Who Craft (creatureswhocraft.com), where she now sells wings inspired by Kali, Freya, and the original faerie queen Diana—wings made for creatures of all kinds who want to frolic in the wood and possibly surprise, and dazzle, a passing human.

❧

See more of Joy Marshall's work on Instagram @thewitchinghourphotography. Visit Tatiana Pimentel on Instagram @teepimentel, Parrish Relics @parrish_relics, and Courtney Fox-Johns @thefoxandtheivy. And visit Frog Hollow @frog_hollow.

Models: Tatiana Pimentel and Courtney Fox-Johns
Wings: Creatures Who Craft
Jewelry: Parrish Relics



La Belle Dame Sans Merci, by Arthur Hughes. Wikimedia Commons

Sans Merci

S. Blackthorn Riddle

O, what can ail thee, Queen of Faery,
Foxglove band withered on thy crown?
Searching the hillside for thy knight-at-arms,
Lace train mired on hallowed ground.

O, what can ail thee, Queen of Faery,
Melancholy gathered on furrowed brow?
The flowers spurned their bloom, my Lady,
The seed, in darkness, has forgotten how.

The birds grow cold in branches bare,
Singing not of sweetbriar gardens and suns,
A blight on the village that circles the hills,
The waters red and the sky grown dun.

I met a valiant knight in the meads,
With eyes dark like the Spanish glen,
His smile was kind, his body strong,
Standing tall amongst gods and men.

He laid me down in grassy knolls
And vowed to me his mortal life,
Traced a clover down my spine,
Begged me thrice to be his wife.

He carried me to the kingdom's edge
And wandered, we, while the day was long.
Blinded by the drum of a heart beguiled,
Drunken on a Faery song.

I led him down beneath the hills
And fed him nectar and buttermilk.
He kissed my eyes as we drifted to dream,
Wrapped tenderly in my regalia of silk.

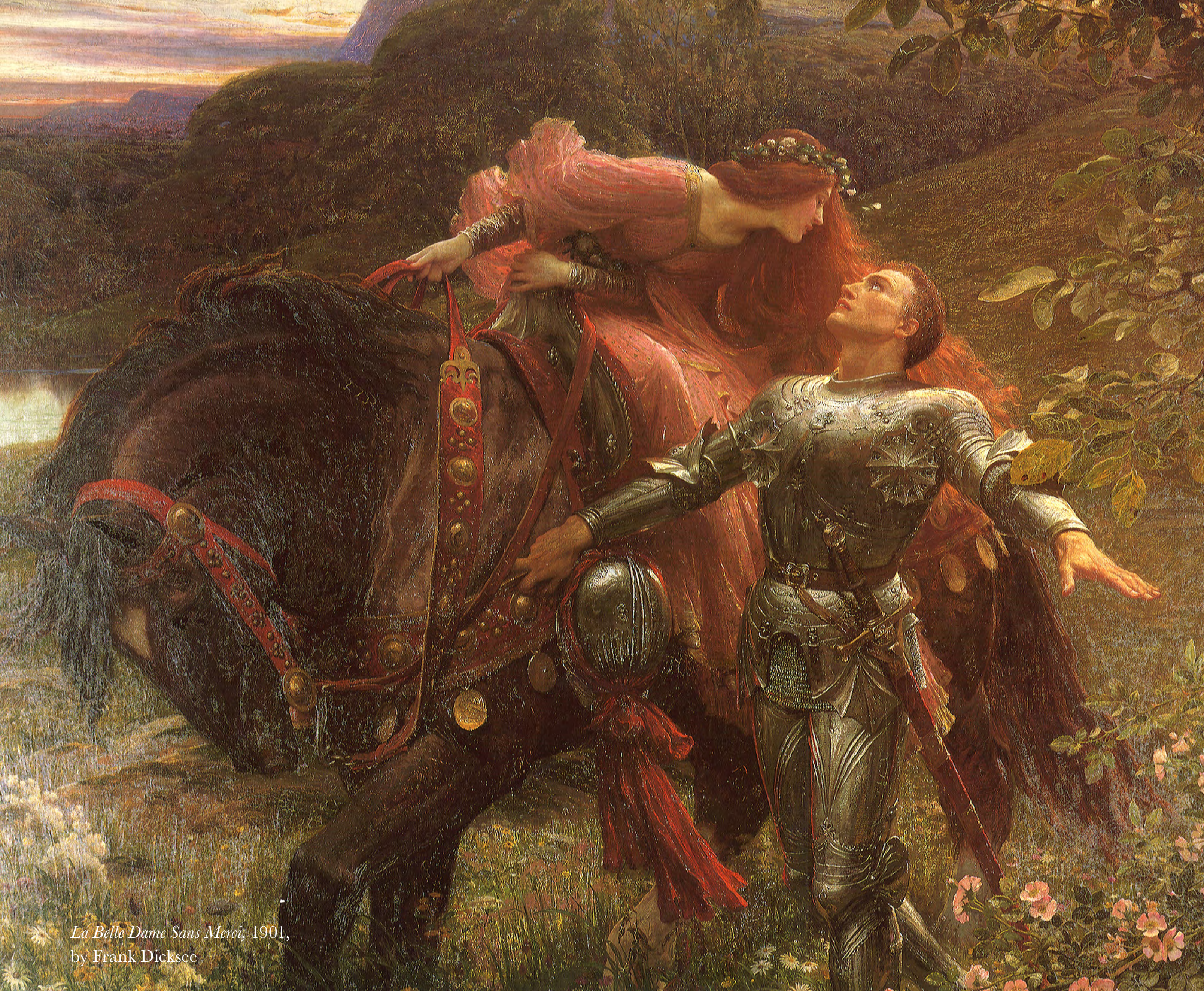
My knight-at-arms, when we were through,
I set him there on that cold hillside,
Alone, and palely-loitering,
Forever searching for his ethereal guide.

Age has laid claim to my body, a hundred-years hence,
And longing poisons the well of my mind.
There is no Spring for the loveless, see,
Love is a curse one can never unbind!

I did good, I did right, as all Faeries do,
Living in the inverse, the Elven plight!
And now my knight grows cold in the earth,
Lost on this hill as he wandered the night.

Thus I sojourn as he in solemn disquiet
Seeking the ghost of that which is lost.
The press of the heart and the crown my penance,
And I will bear this weight, no matter the cost!

S. Blackthorn Riddle is a freelance writer and forest punk living on the borderlands of New York City with a menagerie of cats, books, and imaginary friends. His work appears in Abyss & Apex. *You can find him on Twitter @Silvatiicus.*



La Belle Dame Sans Merci, 1901, by Frank Dicksee

One Knight Stand...

BY KIRSTY STONELL WALKER

In my youth, many a story of rip-roaring adventure, thrills, unbelievable coincidences, and misplaced shoes often began with the following exchange:

"What happened to you last night? You look wrecked!"

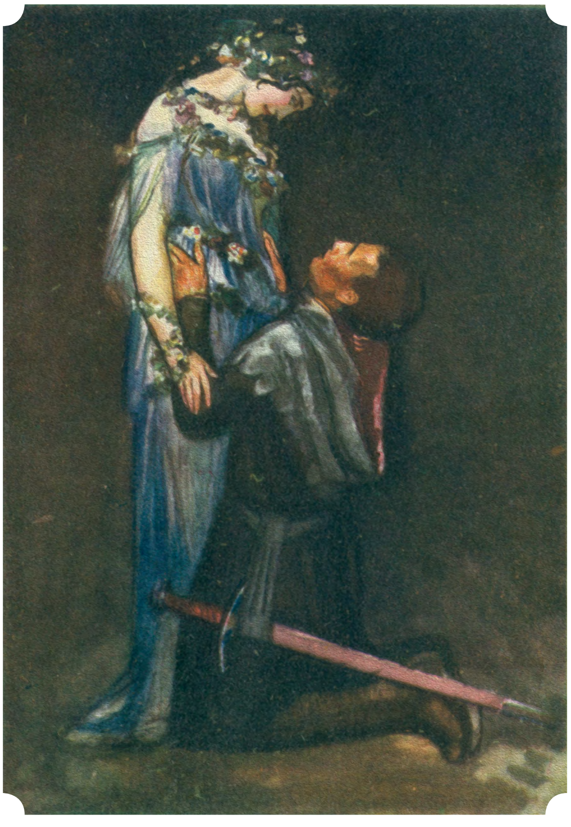
"My friend, you would not believe me if I told you …"

Thence would begin a tale of misadventure involving low-priced cider, dubious takeaway food, and probably a National Trust car park before going back to someone's unpleasant flat and then never seeing them again. Mercifully, most of us seem to have survived these encounters, cured by nothing more than a couple of aspirin and a very hot shower, but we all know how unwise these escapades are. Of course, none of that knowledge stops us repeating it all next Friday night, as Katy Perry would attest. Who knew that in cataloging possibly one of the most chaotic pre-weekend booze-and-bad-behavior binges, Ms. Perry was merely emulating the cautionary tale of a knight on the town involving a faerie, some bad choices, and an elven grot?

Foreshadowing all of this TGI modern malarkey is, of course, John Keats's beautifully enthralling poem "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," which is about just such a life-changing, health-endangering encounter with a magical one-night stand. For the Victorians, this poem from 1819 sparked something in them that was both seductive and deeply troubling. Keats, a Romantic poet, found a very willing audience in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (formed thirty years after the publication of "La Belle Dame"), and subsequent painters and illustrators found resonance in his work. Something about his wholesome, noble knight being led astray by a mystical lass struck a chord or possibly gave them something to aspire to, as they dreamed of being ruined in a similarly romantic manner.

Our story begins with the romantically phrased question, "O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, / Alone and palely loitering?" When Keats redrafted the poem in 1820, he changed "knight-at-arms" to "wretched wight," a slightly more puzzling phrase, bringing to mind something pale and wraithlike. However, it's the 1819 version that gave illustrators the idea that the life-altering encounter was had by a knight, with all its noble and holy connotations, clad in shining armor or shimmering chainmail. From the opening description, we are told that the unlucky knight is haggard and gaunt, feverish and worryingly close to death. Blimey, exactly what did he get up to last night?

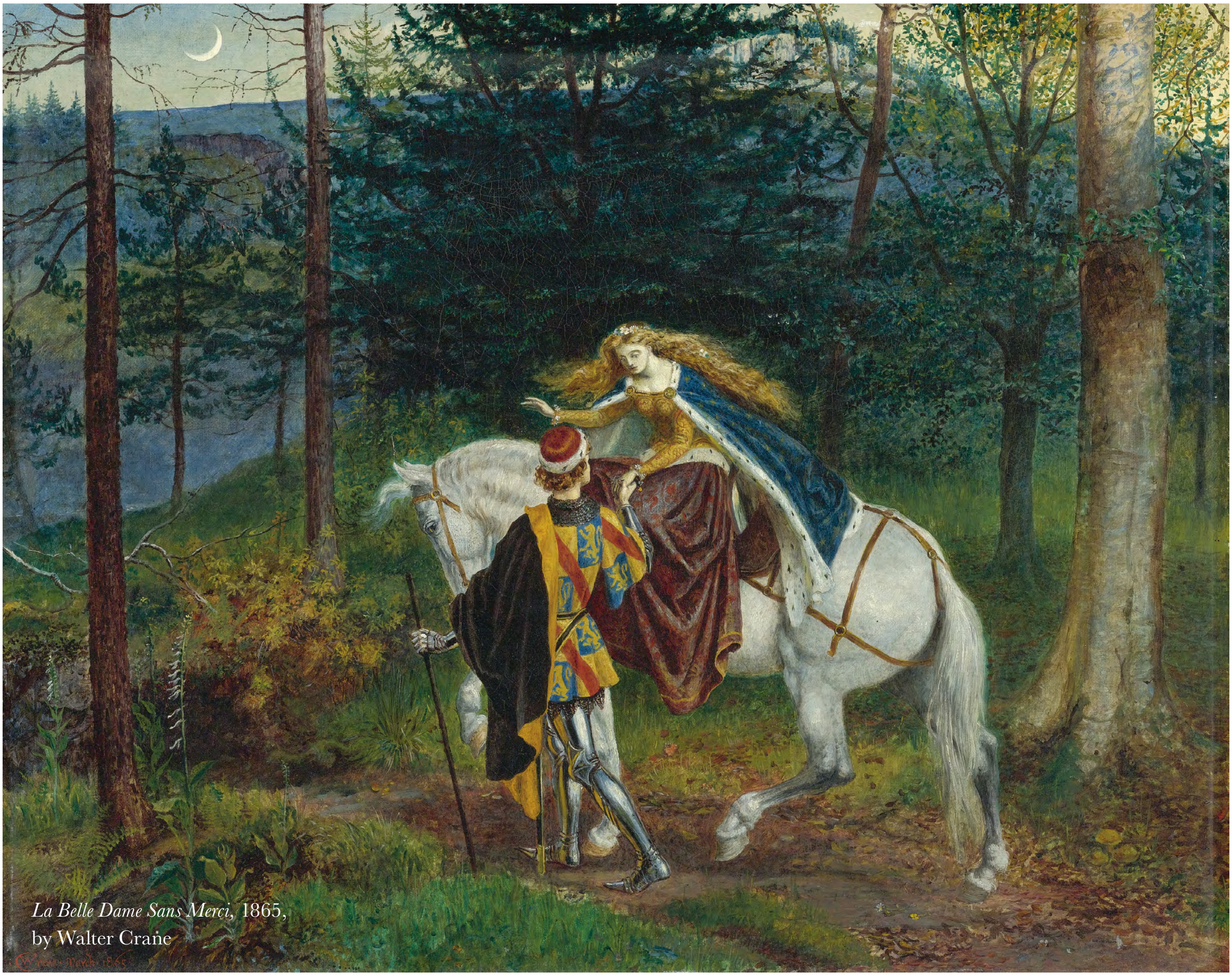
The knight launches into his story without any messing about. It begins the moment he met a woman—and not just any woman but "a faery's child." She has three aspects that draw him in—long hair, wild eyes, and light feet. Had I known this was what it took to attract men, my teen years would have been spent emulating Kate Bush in her "Wuthering Heights" video. Indeed, in John William Waterhouse's 1893 painting of the meeting, the purple-dressed girl lassoes her knight with her hair, snaring him with her attractions, and bringing him down to her level, completely defenseless, despite his armor and sword. In Robert Anning Bell's 1907 illustration for the poem in *Palgrave's Golden Treasury* (right), our knight is on his knees, his sword hanging awkwardly and uselessly by his side as he holds onto the flower-clad vision of loveliness. This fighting man never trained for such an opponent as this, and you know things are not going to end well.



Many painters focus on the moment that the knight lifts the girl onto his horse. Even if all were not lost before, the moment she's on your horse, it really is all over. In possibly the most dramatic and beautiful of all the depictions, Frank Dicksee shows us a knight paralyzed by the sight of the girl on his horse, his arms thrown out to steady himself as if struck. Even his enormous black charger seems to bow its head in submission. It's no coincidence that the red bridle that harnesses the horse is a similar color to the red dress and hair of the girl who is harnessing the bold knight. Walter Crane shows an equally besotted knight, beguiled by his horse-riding love and being taken off to who knows where, while the horse gives him definite side-eye. Similarly, Arthur Hughes has an undated painting of a love-struck knight gazing helplessly at an impossibly bending girl who curves, serpent-like, to hypnotize him. His horse looks down in despair. That horse knows something's up. Like your sober best friend on a wild night out, he knows he's going to have to carry your sorry wreckage back from somewhere, for absolutely no thanks whatsoever.

That horse is not wrong, because after pausing for a quick snack on "roots of relish sweet" together with honey and manna-dew, she whisks him off to her "elfin grot." It's a tribute to how alluring our faery child is that with only one murmur of "I love thee true," she can entice this young man off to somewhere with the word *grot* in its name. In artists' renderings, we don't tend to see her "grot," if you excuse the expression, but Anning Bell comes through for us again in an 1897 G. Bell & Sons edition of Keats's poems. After returning to the grot and getting up to some shenanigans that involved him kissing her eyes while she cries, they both fall into a slumber on her mossy floor. There are so many red flags in this encounter, I don't know where to start, but, moving on, here is where we come to the drama of the piece. Anning Bell illustrated the verses with the slumbering knight clutching to our Belle Dame's bosom in a cave when all of a sudden, in his dream, figures gesture from the walls in horrific sympathy: "I saw pale knights, and princes too, / Pale warriors, death-pale were they all; / Who cried—'La belle Dame sans merci / Hath thee in thrall!' " It's not that I'm not grateful for the heads-up or anything, but that is the equivalent of someone leaning in after you have drunk your second pint of sherry and murmuring, "Now, that wasn't a wise move, was it?" Not helpful, Pale Warriors, not helpful at all.

The horrific realization that his lovely faery girl is a mystical Bluebeard who definitely has a type seems to propel our lovelorn knight back to the reality of a cold hillside and a future of palely loitering. He abruptly finishes his sorry tale with



La Belle Dame Sans Merci, 1865,
by Walter Crane

an acknowledgment that everything is rubbish now, and it will be forever winter in his heart, but what has happened and why does he take it so badly? Why did all this strike such a chord with the Victorians?

The Victorians loved a femme fatale, and their art is littered with them, all pouting and alluring. The Pre-Raphaelite depictions of La Belle Dame with her loose hair fit nicely into a genre of pictures containing women such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Lady Lilith* (1866-8) and Frederick Sandys's *Medea* (1868). These are seemingly gorgeous women, but they have an ax to grind, and becoming entangled with them will be very detrimental to your well-being. Beautiful sorceresses and ice-cold demon women were happily hung on the walls of successful businessmen's homes possibly for the same reason that "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" rang such a bell with them: It is the tale of a powerful, complacent man not seeing a hidden danger.

At the root of the poem, a reader can see a man who has been successful and brave, fought in many battles, and overcome many foes. But the thing that will destroy him is a small faery girl, a little wisp who barely talks and seems harmless. Figuratively hung on her wall are the heads of many such men—kings, princes, and knights—all men who had power in the male sphere and thought that was enough. In the unknown, faery female sphere, that power means nothing, and capturing you is as easy as picking a flower. Possibly the paintings were there to show how close, how unseen, that danger was, and maybe some men bought those images to remind themselves that risking everything for a pretty face is definitely not worth it. Maybe some even looked on the paintings and thought, "Look at that idiot, falling for that! I'd never be such fool…" while idly musing on a card game they had planned, that nice bottle of Scotch that waited in their study, or a mistress—as William Holman Hunt immortalized it in his painting *The Awakening Conscience* (1853).

Another reading of the poem is that the Belle Dame is not only a woman; she represents all the seemingly innocent choices or at least apparently harmless vices that have the potential to ruin you. I am reminded of the Victorian love of images of flamboyant English Civil War soldiers who are corrupted by cards, drink, and love. I am reminded of William Shakespeare Burton's *The Wounded Cavalier* (1855), a Pre-Raphaelite painting of a gloriously beautiful young man dying in a woodland after being stabbed over a card game. As if to hammer home the point, the cards that are scattered by his picturesquely dying figure are hearts. When your poor life choices are done, the Victorians are reminded, you are left dying in the wilderness, listening to the silence of no birds singing.

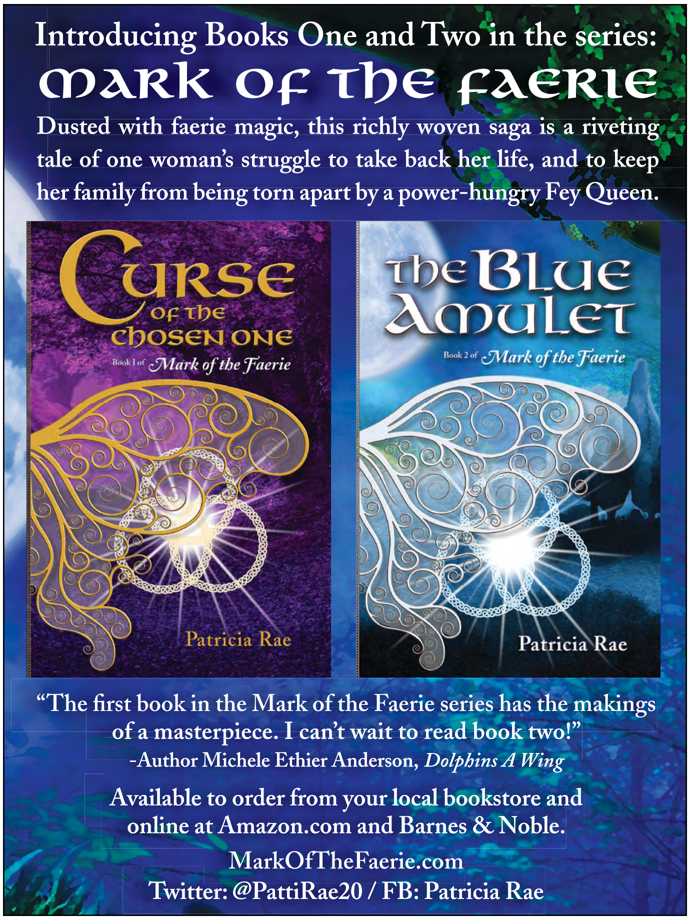
Hang on, though, just one minute. Let's just remember that this is a story being told by a ruined man. These women in the illustrations and paintings are undoubtedly beautiful, so we quite understand why our young man is tempted away, but the Pre-Raphaelites were interpreting this poem during a period of spectacular patriarchal dominance, where men were creating empires, making scientific leaps, and conquering the land and sea at an unprecedented rate. Why on earth would they be shaken by a little, wild-haired faerie girl? The answer is manifold, starting with the female path to suffrage. During the 19th century, women were starting to call upon men to give them equality. The fear this seemingly engendered in men spilled out as an entire genre of machinating temptresses after your power and essential manly juices, lying in wait to bring you low. The more beautiful the woman, the greater the fear, and the fairer sex stopped being the "Angel of the House" (as poet Coventry Patmore patronizingly christened the perfect wife) and started being potential Salomes, Delilahs, and Judiths, just looking for an opportunity to lop bits of you off when you least expected it. The Belle Dame of Keats's poem and the Pre-Raphaelite works is less obviously sexy in that way, but her loose hair signaled her potentially loose morals, and her bohemian, otherworldly glamour should be enough to warn you that this girl is, as my Grandma would say, not better than she ought to be.

What is it, though, that the Belle Dame does that is so awful? As a knight, the teller of this sad tale has presumably spent his victorious career conquering other equally ambitious men in an all-male environment. The kings and princes who bewail their commonly shared fate from his fever dreams all come from a background of patriarchy, of male rule and dominance. The fact that a woman has destroyed this noble institution should be a warning not to allow women to get beyond themselves with all that equal voting rights nonsense. Look at the damage they do to great, powerful men! No, suffragettes, we are not letting you ruin a perfectly good patriarchy, thank you very much. When all the men cry that the beautiful, merciless woman has them hooked but won't give them what they want, I am reminded of the girls in Christina Rossetti's poem "Goblin Market" who become addicted to the Goblin's forbidden fruit. However, Rossetti is a little wiser than her fellow Pre-Raphaelites. She blames the Goblins and not the fruit for the addiction and destruction of the girls who taste it. In other words, if we read the poem and its associated paintings as a man destroyed by the desire for a woman who is alluring and magical, maybe we should be addressing the society that makes women (and faeries) responsible for our bad decisions rather than taking responsibility ourselves and not fetishizing the unknown and desirable in the first place. Blame the goblins, not the fruit.

The message to take from this is not to blame faeries or women for your prejudices and poor behavior. Honestly, I'm sorry that the knight is just sitting on a hill at the end, feeling sorry for himself, but it's not like he didn't have red flags popping up when he met the wild-eyed faery child who didn't speak. His underestimation of the poor women and mystical folk is what gets him into trouble and leaves him questioning his worldview. If La Belle Dame tells us anything, it is that if you are planning to take advantage of someone and she looks fae, just walk away. The moral could also very well be this: If your horse looks dubious, it's probably a bad idea.

◆

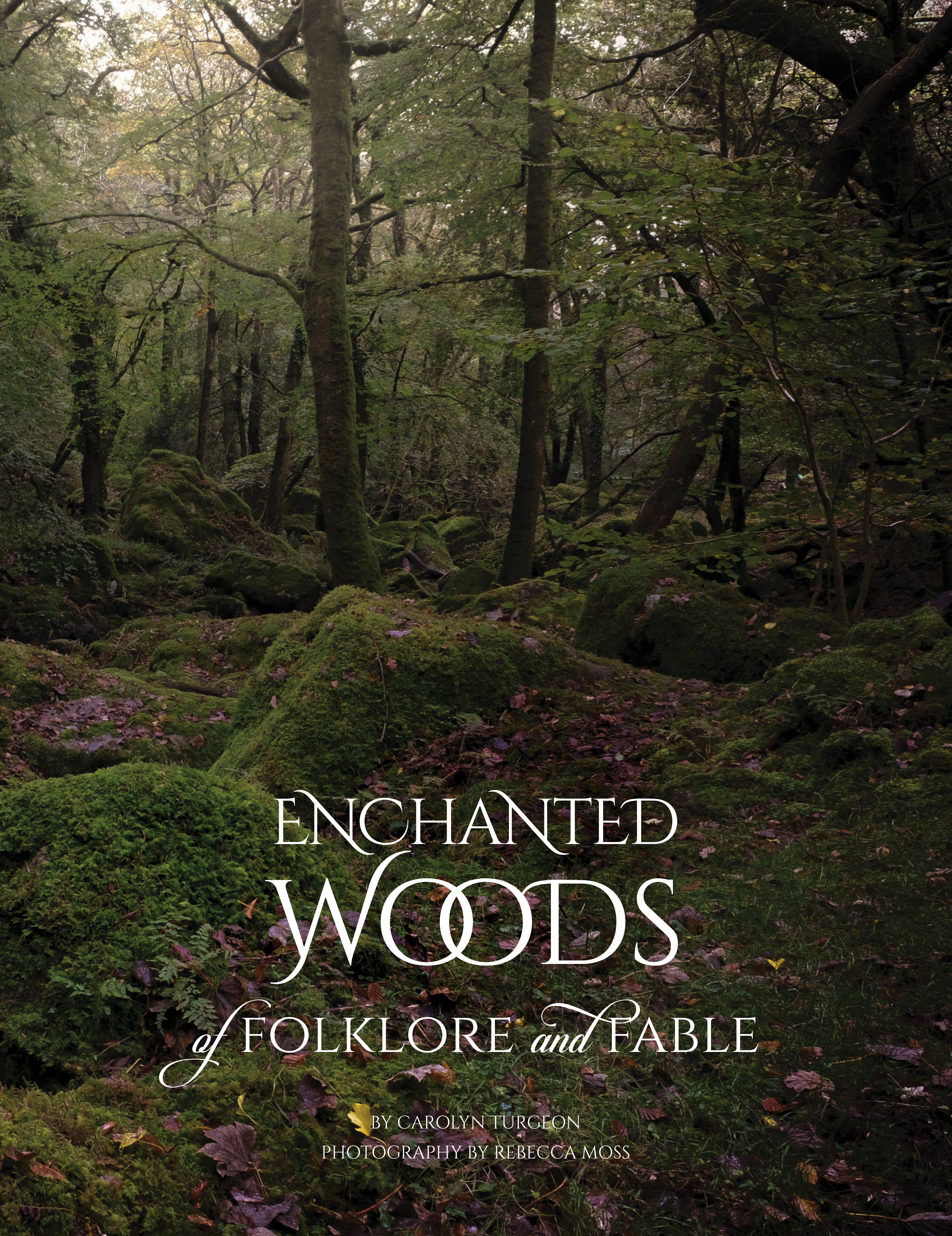
Kirsty Stonell Walker is a writer and researcher whose passion is bringing forward the stories of women who might have otherwise vanished in history. In 2020 she published Light and Love, *a biography of the remarkable relationship between pioneering Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron and her maid Mary Hillier, who between them created wonderful images of beauty. Visit her on Instagram @kstonellwalker.*


Curse of the Chosen One
Book 1 of Mark of the Faerie
Patricia Rae
The Blue Amulet
Book 2 of Mark of the Faerie
Patricia Rae

Introducing Books One and Two in the series:
MARK OF THE FAERIE
Dusted with faerie magic, this richly woven saga is a riveting tale of one woman's struggle to take back her life, and to keep her family from being torn apart by a power-hungry Fey Queen.

"The first book in the Mark of the Faerie series has the makings of a masterpiece. I can't wait to read book two!"
-Author Michele Ethier Anderson, *Dolphins A Wing*

Available to order from your local bookstore and online at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.
MarkOfTheFaerie.com
Twitter: @PattiRae20 / FB: Patricia Rae



ENCHANTED WOODS *of* FOLKLORE *and* FABLE

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY REBECCA MOSS

Enchanted Woods

Carolyn Turgeon

The places Rebecca Moss photographs seem to have sprung from some old, old faerie story, haunted by a Titania or Mab or Morgan. Even though I've never been to a forest like the ones in her photos, I feel sure that I can remember having visited a place like that once. Every photo is like a little gateway to another world—a buried, ancient memory. When I first scuba-dove I could not believe the things I saw; I couldn't believe that such an astonishing, magical world exists just below the surface of the water, that I might have gone my whole life without witnessing it. These photos make me feel the same way. These are the wild woods where the queens we're celebrating in this issue would live. I hope one day to visit these actual places, but for now I have—and you have—Moss's exquisite captures that fill her Instagram feed @one_becky_blue and, soon enough, her online shop.

> *"I have thought about why I go to the woods and what is going on for me when I do. I go to daydream, to allow a different world into my headspace. To let my mind kind of loosen its grip on human life and just acknowledge that I am part of nature too."*

We've shared Moss's photos for years now on our own Instagram, but, unusually, didn't know anything at all about her, this woman who stalks these ancient spaces in photos so vivid you can practically smell the moss and soil. So one day this winter we scheduled a call on Skype, which she'd never used before, and then she appeared as I might have imagined: in her stone cottage, a fire behind her in a little stove, with a fae, delicate beauty and pale, glimmering hair. She lives, she explains, in Dartmoor, in the moorlands, surrounded by the footprints of thousands-year-old huts and twisted, moss-ridden forests that she can walk to from her front door. She did not come from this place, though. She spent most of her childhood in Holland and grew up near the sea, and also spent years in the West Country and London. Dartmoor has only been her chosen home for the past five years.

She's been taking photographs since she was a kid, but only started taking "green" photos around the time she moved to Dartmoor. Once upon a time she was a street photographer in London, taking moody black-and-whites of people and developing them by hand in the darkroom. To her, it's not so different to photograph Dartmoor's forests, where every tree has its own character and personality she tries to capture.

Her lifestyle inspires jealousy. A few times a week, she leaves her cottage and enters the forest, immediately taking herself off the pathway. This is the secret to forests, she says: to leave the paths and get properly lost but to always have a properly charged phone with GPS so you can find your way back. (An extra battery doesn't hurt either.) This way you can tune into the woods and become part of them. "That's the magic for me," she says. "Being on my own and seeing what happens." Because the light has to be just right for her to photograph, she spends most of her time exploring, maybe sitting for an hour or two and zoning out. She'll focus on all the life swarming around her, every small detail—light in a web or buzzing insects, birds, the lines and curves of trees, branches and the shape of stones. Her goal: "To get into that headspace of being a thing in woods rather than a person in world." The energy of the woods is very powerful, she says, a beautiful fae energy she can tap into and get lost in. It is when she lets go of human thinking that she can "cross over"—then "all of a sudden I'm aware that I'm sitting in the heart of something very alive and much bigger than me. I realize that I'm actually as small, in the scheme of things, as even the beetles and the birds."

And then the light shifts, and she picks up her camera to capture it.

Later she writes to me: "I have thought about why I go to the woods and what is going on for me when I do. I go to daydream, to allow a different world into my headspace. To let my mind kind of loosen its grip on human life and just acknowledge that I am part of nature too."

While some of us can visits parks and forests, not all parks allow wandering in this way, and not all of us have the enchanted wood outside our door. Moss's images are a kind of portal, though she wishes she could capture "the smells of earth, the feel of wind on skin." I tell her I feel those things when I look at her images. I feel them, remember them.

For those of us who can only dream and remember the feeling of losing ourselves in the forest, Moss advises, "let yourself daydream, let your imagination flow free. It is the only thing that completely belongs to any of us, and it is a kind of freedom, and the forest is a beautiful headspace to be in. Even if the starting place for your daydream is just a photograph, it is still a real and beautiful place somewhere."

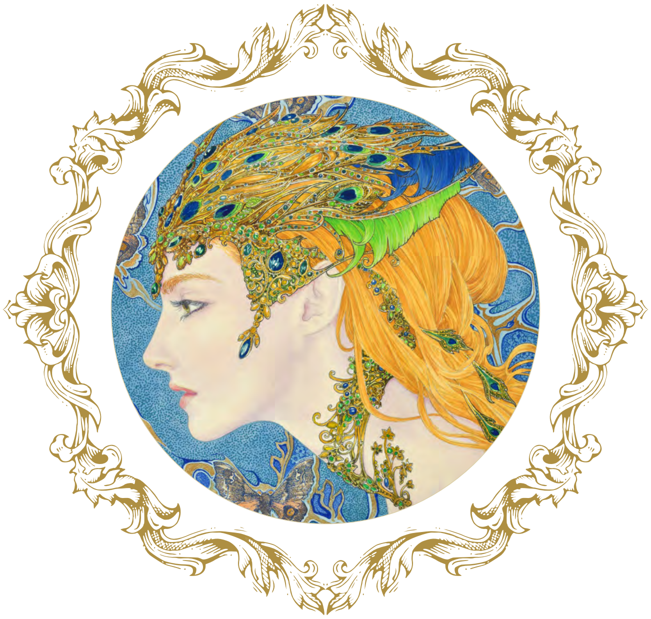
Daydreaming is not a replacement for experience, but an experience in itself. "I think daydreaming is the beginning of many of life's adventures," she says. "There is so much bombardment of stuff in the world. Remembering that there is a beautiful natural world and daydreaming into that space has got to be good for your head. Actually, for sure it is."

As Branches Bud Around Small Nests

by Katharyn Howd Machan

I live where lakes gleam, calm.
Heron country. Trout.
Mornings are violets, crocus, moss.
I rise and walk to gather sky
into my simple basket, a gift
from my sister where Autumn turns
our year with pumpkins and husks.
Here in my realm crickets begin
the song they will end with her.
How glad I am to know the hare
that carries Oestre's painted eggs!
And when a human child comes searching
I don't whisper *Come away.*
I take their hand and together we find
sweet green grasses warming with sun
that comes to us sooner, stays with us longer
every softly blossoming new Spring day.

Katharyn Howd Machan lives in a town in central New York resplendent with gorges and waterfalls. Author of thirty-nine published collections of poems—most recently A Slow Bottle of Wine, *winner of the Jessie Bryce Niles Chapbook Competition–she teaches creative writing in fairy-tale-based courses at Ithaca College.*



ED ORG'S ENCHANTED WOMEN

by Jill Gleeson

Sit in sweet wonderment gazing at the work of British artist Ed Org and you will be transported to another world, one of mythical, magical women—powerful, capable, but all the more graceful for it. With a style that lies somewhere between Alphonse Mucha and the Art Nouveau movement and Pre-Raphaelites like Edward Burne-Jones, Org's magnificent art often imagines lush woodland queens enwrapped and embraced by the forest. Draped in twining greenery, they wear crowns of peacock feathers or fantastical animal horns, their flowing hair woven with flowering blooms. Around them rest their animal subjects: swan and hare, butterfly and bird.

It's fair to say that Org's aesthetic—his fascination with both the natural world and the mystical—can be traced to a youth spent in Shropshire, England. Legends and folklore always interested him, as did the surrounding woods that he says he was free to roam as he liked. "Though it was a heavily mined area in the early 19th and 20th centuries, nature had reclaimed everything," he says. "I could explore dappled woodlands, ruined barns, secret pools and streams, disused railway lines with hidden apple and pear trees, and ruined cottages with secret plum trees. Above all it was a landscape rich in wildlife, which was a paradise for village kids like us."

Although art didn't precisely entice him as a child, Org's early talent must have been prodigious. Family lore has it that his primary school headmaster told his father that Org would become an artist in adulthood. Fate took its course a decade or so later, and Org entered Cheltenham College of Art. There he discovered the work of Mucha and the English book illustrator Arthur Rackham, as well as J.R.R. Tolkien. He was so influenced by the *Lord of the Rings* novels that he based his B.A. art show on them.

After a spell as a graphic designer, Org returned to his personal work in 1992. Today he is famed for his mysterious, ethereal pencil drawings as well as newer art made in pen, ink, and watercolor. "I find it frees me up stylistically," he says. "I perhaps experiment a bit more with watercolor, as I use colored pencils, chalk, and pastels to get the various effects. However, I always return to the pencil ... Different pencils leave their own distinctive mark. I use engraved strokes, smudging, graphite powder mixed with gum Arabic, random squiggles, and hatching. It is the mosaic-like buildup of various pencil marks and patterns, the finer detail, that I find interesting."

With a home in the celebrated natural splendor of England's Cotswolds, Org can roam as much as he did as a child, finding inspiration in what he calls "the wonderful bird life and butterflies in summer." But his studio sets his imagination free as well, chock-full as it is of books on shelves and inspiring items like colored glass bottles draped with jewels of all kinds, vases holding beautiful peacock feathers, and mannequin heads adorned with handmade floral headpieces. With their help, he says, "I can re-create a variety of themes such as medieval, *Arabian Nights*, or numerous fantasy scenes with furniture and props."

As he prepares to enter the third decade of the second phase of his career, Org says that first and foremost he "strives to create and perpetuate beauty. My work may be influenced by art from a bygone era," he adds, "but I hope that it has just as much relevance today. It will be for others to decide whether my work has any value in the future."

◆

See more of Ed Org's work on Instagram @ed_org_art.

Jill Gleeson is a travel journalist and memoirist who lives and writes in the mountains and valleys of Pennsylvania. Find her at gleesonreboots.com.

18+

WHAT IS
AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

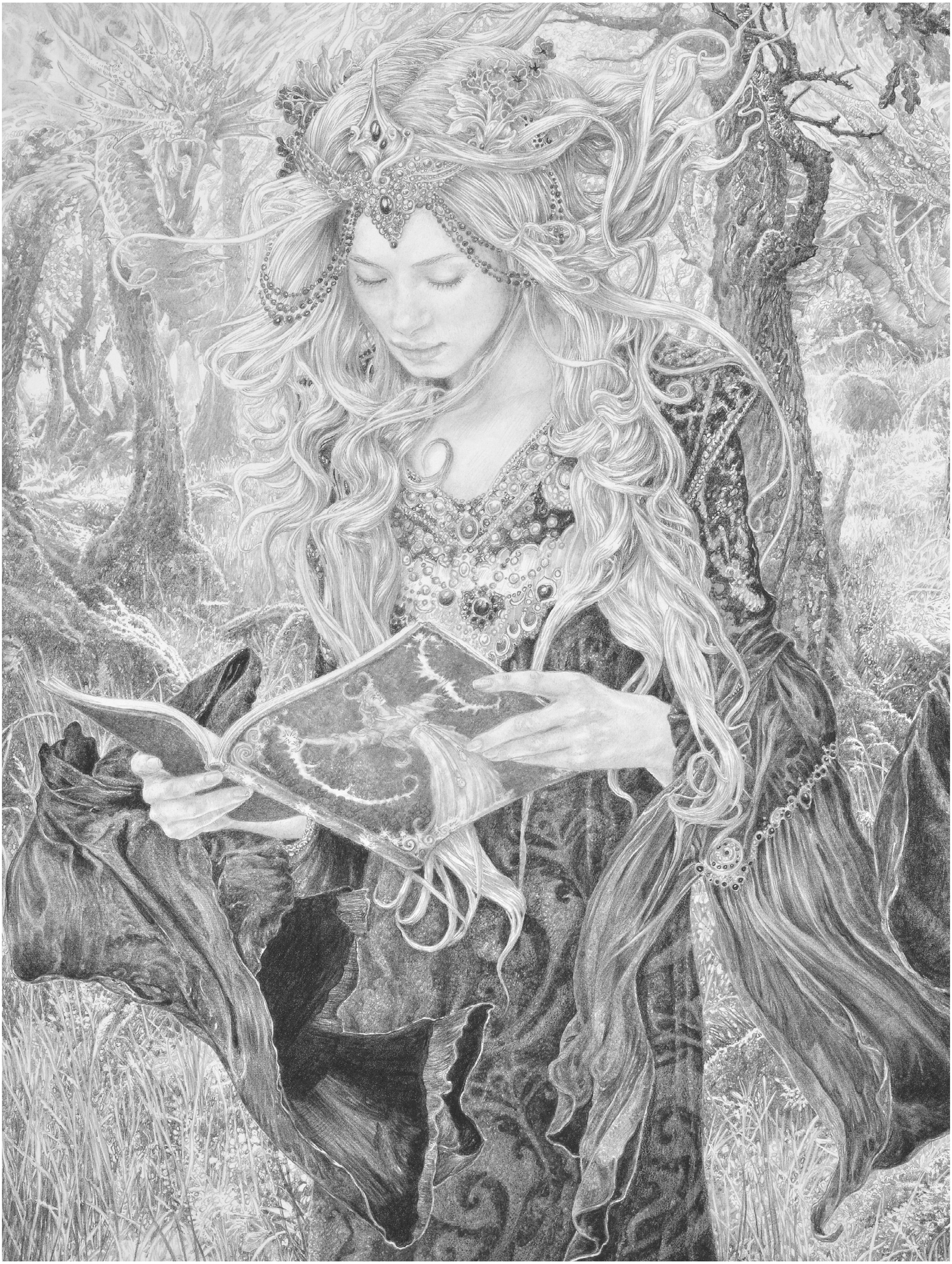
18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

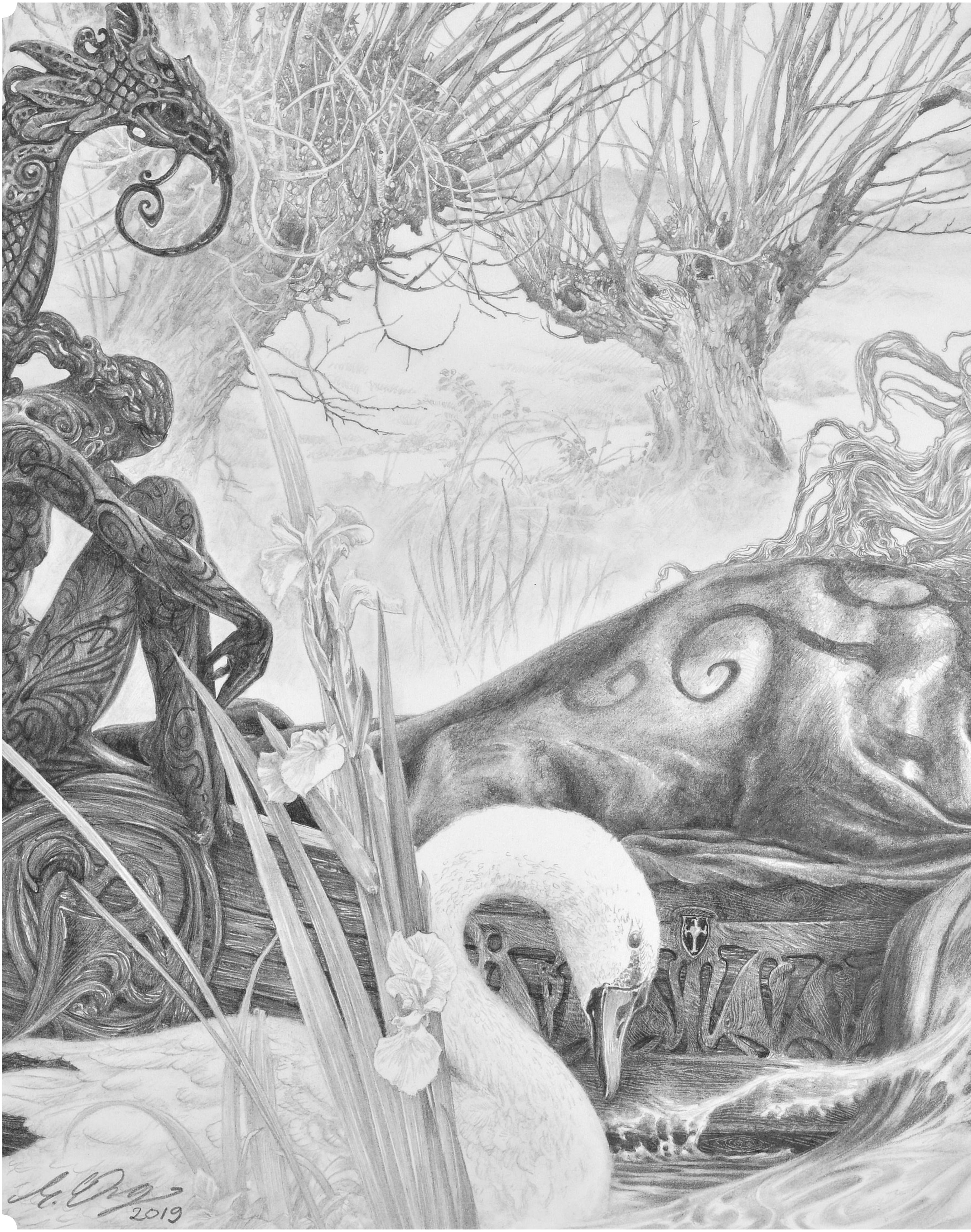
All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu




2019

The QUEEN of DREAMS

REDISCOVERING SELF-LOVE

by Monica Crosson

In the spring, one should be suspicious of witches disguised as hares—at least that's what the woman, who had lost faith in herself long ago, had read once in a book about faerie creatures. And this is what she thought when she spied a curious rabbit nibbling at the lettuce in her garden one morning when the birds sang so gloriously that the clatter woke her from the strange dream she'd been having every night for an entire week. The dream was of a faerie queen emerging from the water with a sword raised high in the air. And every time the queen spied the woman watching from the willows, the woman would awake with a start. Now she wiggled her toes in the loamy soil and thought about her dream as she shooed the wee rabbit back to the hedgerow and gathered radishes, asparagus, and spinach for her lunch later in the day.

But that rabbit kept appearing. It was nibbling on dandelions as she turned garden beds and planted her window boxes after breakfast. It rested under the rose trellis as she hung laundry just before lunch. So when she saw the rabbit again while sipping tea on the porch at twilight, when the veil between the worlds thins and allows one to see the realm of the fae, she decided she would follow the creature.

Maybe the hare was indeed a witch, the woman thought. The rabbit seemed to sense she was there and quickly took off down a path that seemed carved through the bramble. And just when the woman thought she lost sight of it, the hare would reappear as if it were waiting for her to catch up.

"There you are silly rabbit," she would say and take off after it again. Deep down she knew this was an act of a senseless human, but following the rabbit had ignited a long-lost curiosity in her.

As the path twisted and turned through a forest of white birch and sweetly scented poplar trees, the woman began to feel a strange familiarity with the area, though she knew she had never explored it before. But as an opening through the trees exposed a small lake, she realized this was the area she had been dreaming of that past week. A breezed picked up, stirring the willow trees and drawing her further to the lake's silky shoreline.

The hare slipped into the surrounding shrubs, and the woman's heart quickened when she heard a splash near the water's edge. She turned, half expecting to see the faerie queen who ruled the lake rise from the water. But the water remained still, and the woman chuckled because everyone knows dreams don't really come true, especially those that haunt you at night. A loud rustle in the shrubs startled her. She clutched her chest and stumbled toward the water as a woman, even older than she, rose from the shrubs.

"I didn't mean to frighten you, Miss," the strange old crone said.

"I'm sorry. I didn't notice you there," the woman replied. "I was lost in a dream, I suppose." She smiled at the frail woman.

"A dream you say?"

The woman felt silly but explained, "I have been dreaming of a beautiful faerie queen who presented me with a sword from this very lake. And when the rabbit led me here … Well …" She blushed, as it really did sound silly. "Never mind."

The old woman smiled and then pointed to the water that glistened under a rising moon. "Was that the sword in your dream?" she asked.

"Why, yes." The woman couldn't believe what she was seeing and pinched her arm to make certain that she was truly awake.

"You're not dreaming, my queen," the crone said. "Take up your sword."

But the woman was confused because that was not how the dream went. And besides, she was no queen. She reluctantly picked up the sword and held it, as the woman had instructed, high above her head. A tear streamed down her face as the weight of the sword reminded her of her unworthiness. "I have done nothing to deserve this. I am not young, and I am not strong, neither physically nor emotionally. I am not accomplished at anything. I am no queen. You have made a mistake."

The crone nodded. "Look into the water and tell me what you see."

The woman looked to the water and watched as her wavering reflection settled in a pool of moonlight. What reflected back was the faerie queen from her dream—strong and confidant in her manner. A being who forgave herself for past mistakes and who acknowledged her own self-worth. And as she gazed into the water, all the pain and self-loathing suddenly rippled away.

"Not accomplished at anything. Not strong." The crone clucked her tongue. "Shame on you."

The woman lowered her sword. "I see now." She smiled.

The crone motioned for her to kneel and then placed a circlet as silver as the streaks of moonlight atop her head.

"And what shall my duties be?" the woman asked.

The old woman smiled. "To honor yourself above all, my dear, and to be a light unto others who have lost sight of their own self-worth. Weave your message into their dreams and leave the rest to me." The crone winked.

When the woman stood, the crone was gone, and in her place, a rabbit was nibbling on tufts of spring grass.

The woman straightened her crown and walked home along a trail speckled with moonglow.

A RITUAL FOR REDISCOVERING SELF-LOVE

One day when the sky was warm and the riverside beckoned, I went to the body of water that knows me best. I went, robed, and with a long sword I used in ritual at times, to the Sauk River where I have drawn down the moon and danced on her banks. That place where I had gathered with my family and friends and where laughter and love have permeated the landscaped for over twenty years. I dropped my robe, revealing to the river the reflection of a woman whose lined face told the story of the hard work, laughter, and tears that have shaped her into a strong multifaceted human being. The glistening water reflected back a particularly deep cesarean scar carved into her abdomen—the battle scar of the bearing of her precious children. Every fold and lump and every line and crease were taken in and relished that day. I was reminded of my strength and capabilities and of the unique splendor that is me.

It was that day that I ritually took the sword and raised it up as a symbol of my shift in self-perception. I am beautiful, I have worth, I am strong, and I am capable of creating positive change. I am a warrior queen, I am divine.

Now it's your turn. What is it that you see when you look into that mirror?

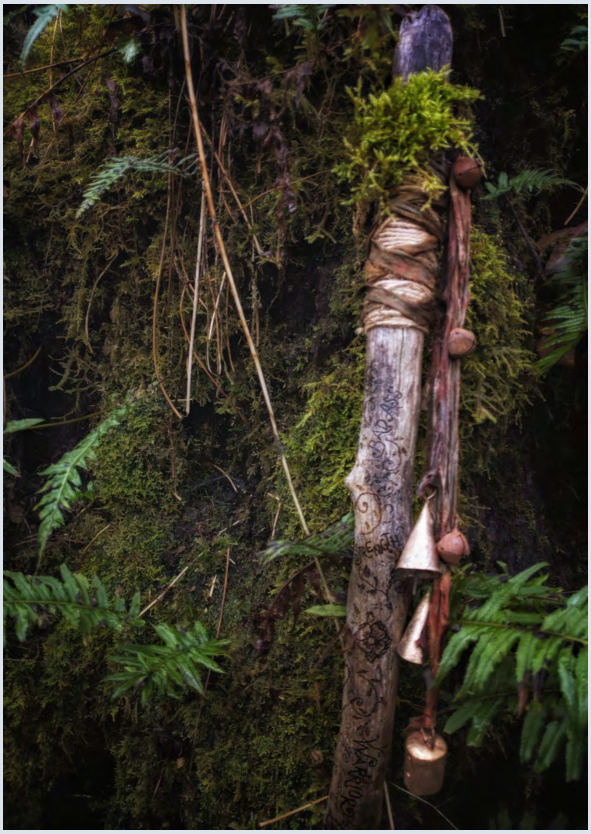
Remember, to be beautiful doesn't mean you have to look like a supermodel. And if you're older, it doesn't mean trying to recapture how you looked at eighteen. Being beautiful is accepting yourself as you are now. Never mind how others think of you, never mind what the latest trends are, never mind what your status is. This ritual is designed for you to see yourself with fresh eyes as the beautiful warrior queen you are. And in turn, you can be the light for others to do the same.

For this ritual you will need:

- *A full-length mirror (if you don't have private access to a body of water)*
- *Decorated staff (directions below) or sword (if you happen to have one)*

If you can perform this ritual at a body of water (lake, stream, ocean, river, pool, tub, etc.), that would be great, but you can always do it in front of a mirror. Begin with a few moments of meditation outdoors, if possible. Use this quiet time to focus on forgiveness. Forgive yourself for judging yourself for so many years. When you are ready, stand in front of the mirror (or body of water) and disrobe. Look closely at your beautiful form and thank your body for its strength and wholeness. Thank your body for honoring you. When you feel ready, raise your staff or sword high into the air and in your own words take back your sovereignty. You are a warrior queen and no one (not even yourself) can make you believe that you are not worthy, strong, or beautiful.

A DECORATED STAFF OF POWER



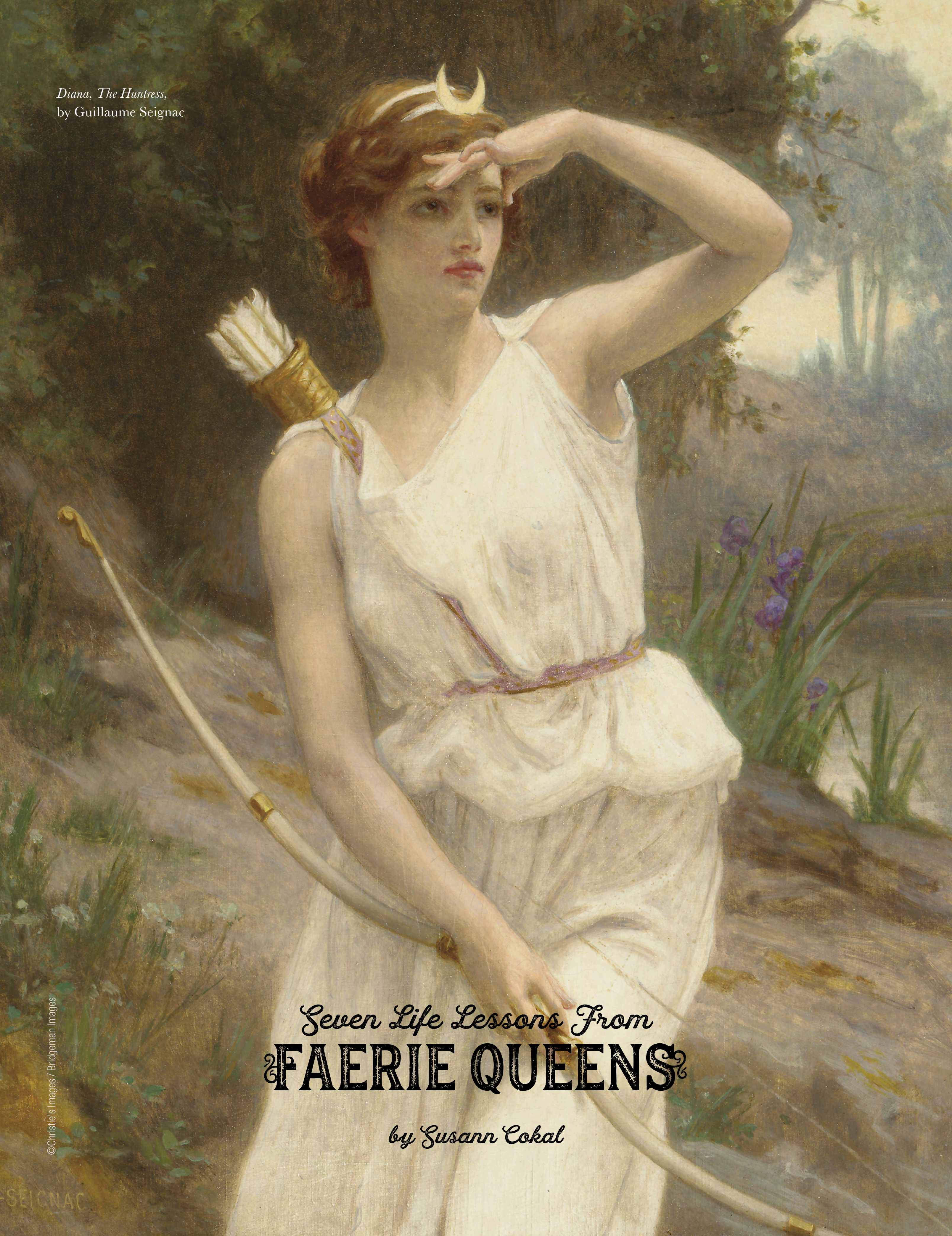
This is a great representation of your own self-worth. After you use it in ritual, place it somewhere you will see it daily as a reminder of your warrior queen spirit.

You will need:

A four-to-five-foot stick or branch that you found or was given to you, or a piece of straight driftwood, or even a wooden dowel from a DIY store
Permanent markers or craft paint (your choice of colors)
Ribbons, yarn, or decorative lace (in a color that is empowering to you)
Wood-burning tool (to burn symbols into the wood)

First, prepare your staff for paint by removing any loose bark and wiping the wood down with a damp cloth. If you have a wood-burning tool, you'll want to burn words or symbols of power on before adding paint. If you choose, paint your staff with colors that are an expression of you. After the paint dries, use the permanent marker to write words of empowerment and to draw symbols that have meaning to you on your staff. Wrap ribbon, yarn, or lace around the top of your staff and tie off, leaving twelve to fourteen inches to hang freely.

Monica Crosson's latest book is Wild Magical Soul: Untame Your Spirit & Connect to Nature's Wisdom. *Follow her on Instagram @monicacrosson.*



Diana, The Huntress,
by Guillaume Seignac

©Christie's Images / Bridgeman Images

Seven Life Lessons From FAERIE QUEENS

by Susann Cokal

It is said that faeries are descended from the old gods who led fallible, morally ambivalent lives long before Christianity tried to stamp out pagan deities. Or they might be rebel angels who were pushed out of heaven, landing on earth rather than in hell.

Who can say? A faerie queen is seldom just one thing. She is a healer and a killer, a friend and a traitor, a lover and an exploiter. She murders with one hand and holds the scales of justice with the other. She is righteous in her own mind even when she does wrong.

Call her a bad good girl or a good bad girl. Use her as an inspiration or a cautionary tale. The faeries are always with us.

Diana of *The Metamorphoses*

The Roman goddess of the moon and the hunt is the original faerie queen, reigning over nighttime and the forest. Perhaps the lone virgin among the gods, she takes swift revenge when she feels she's been slighted.

Take Actaeon, a fellow hunter, who happens to find Diana bathing in a pond and stays to enjoy the show. (Whether he goes beyond watching varies according to who tells the tale.) In *The Metamorphoses,* Ovid wrote that the goddess's nymphs try to shield her nakedness, but she is too tall to be easily hidden.

Her wrath is quick and severe. She scoops up a handful of water and dashes it in Actaeon's face, challenging him to

Tell, if thou can'st, the wond'rous sight disclos'd,
A Goddess naked to thy view expos'd.

Actaeon never will be able to boast about what he's seen. That splash transforms him into a stag, and his own dogs chase him down and tear him viciously apart.

Was his punishment too harsh? Did Diana overreact? Ovid's gods can't decide. But we can.

Life Lesson: Always assume the answer is no until it is clearly yes.

Morgan le Fay of *Le Morte D'Arthur*

Faerie, witch, healer, ruler of Avalon … seductress, schemer, murderous wife, incestuous sinner … No faerie queen is slipperier than Morgan le Fay.

Early French and British versions of the Arthurian legend paint Morgan as a kindly figure who heals the sick and protects the king; only occasionally is she his older sister. But she quickly started to show a more malevolent side, and by the 1200s she has become a moral seesaw. In the era's epic poems, she deals out a curse as readily as a blessing, revels in nasty tricks against Lancelot and Queen Guinevere, and sometimes tries to kill her unsuspecting husband.

She's at her wicked best in Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur,* published in 1485. At last she comes into her own as Arthur's older half-sister and his fiercest enemy. While plotting to seize his throne, she seduces a good number of Round Table knights and apprentices herself to Merlin for more magic, also with sex on the side. She even sets her cap at the good Sir Lancelot, though he sees her black heart and refuses her.

Morgan is nothing if not contradictory, and sometimes it's for the good. In the end, although she is partially responsible for Arthur's titular death, she makes amends. She carries him away to the afterlife in Avalon, where she will continue to rule while tending his wounds. Maybe she just wanted him to love her all long.

In the centuries since Malory, Morgan has become more lawless and more popular than ever. In T.H. White's *Once and Future King,* she finally adds Arthur to her list of sexual conquests, and she becomes largely responsible for placing their child, Mordred, on the throne.

So why do we love her? She rejects the rules and she still makes a grand gesture at the end.

Life Lesson: Keep your friends close, your enemies closer, and your relatives always in sight. Also: Blood really is thicker than water, even bloodstained water.

Nimue of Arthurian Legend

Will Merlin never learn to be careful with his apprentices?

The faerie princess Nimue is not to be confused with the stay-in-place, waterbound Lady of the Lake, who sometimes goes by the same name. *This* Nimue rides roughshod through Camelot, proving, as T.H. White wrote, that "love is a trick played on us by the forces of evolution. Pleasure is the bait laid down by the same. There is only power."

Nimue's first power is her sexuality, and she wields it like a weapon. Knowing Merlin is utterly besotted, she vamps him with a classic cycle of flirtation, rejection, and promises. She *will* bed him; he just has to teach her one more spell … and another one … and maybe another … until she, at least, is satisfied.

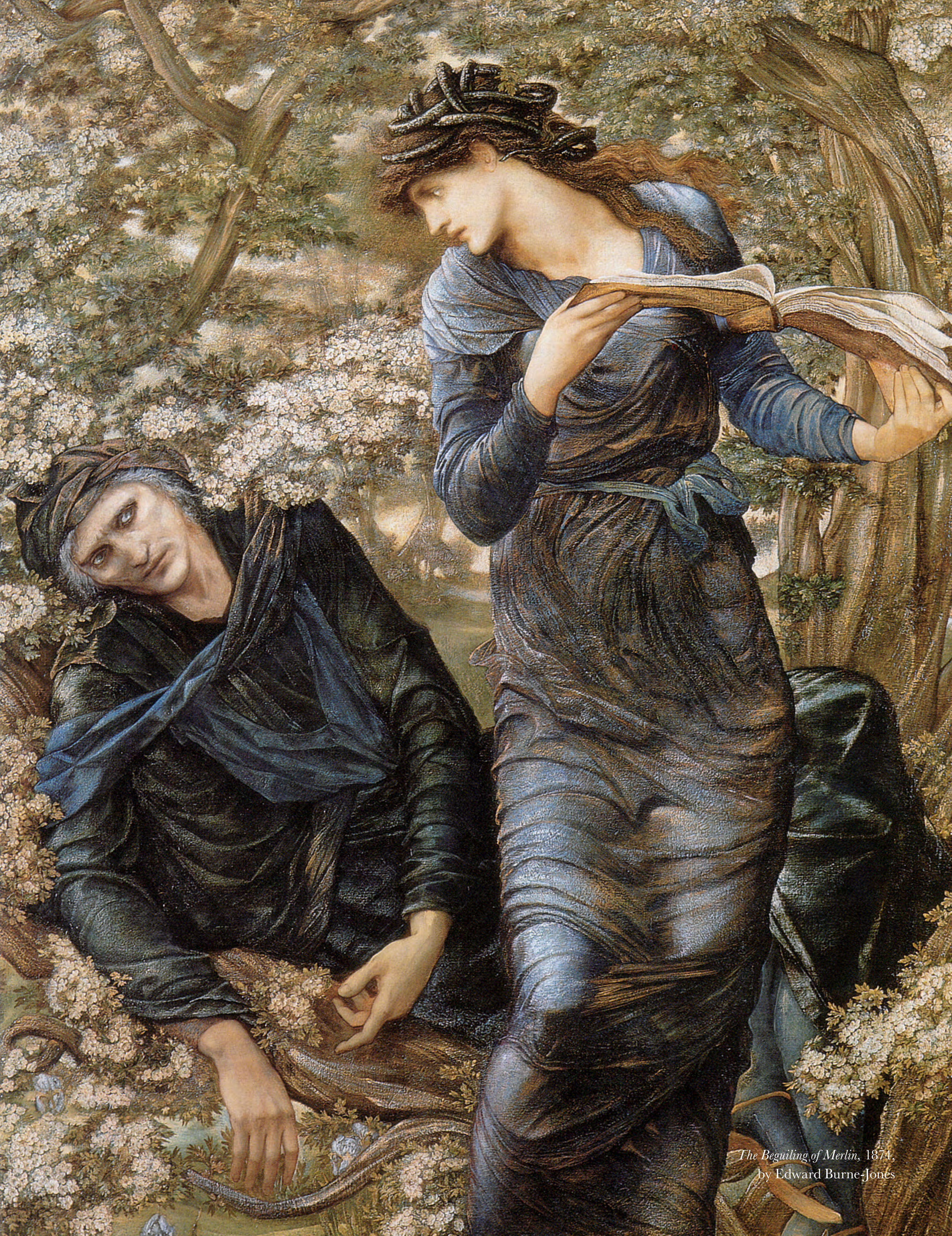
Once Nimue has had enough, she uses Merlin's magic against him to trap him in a tree or a cave (choose whatever's scariest to you) and congratulate herself on a job well done. In some versions, Merlin doesn't even mind what she's done; this prison of love is his happy place.

Life Lesson: A mortal's greatest strength might also be his weakness.

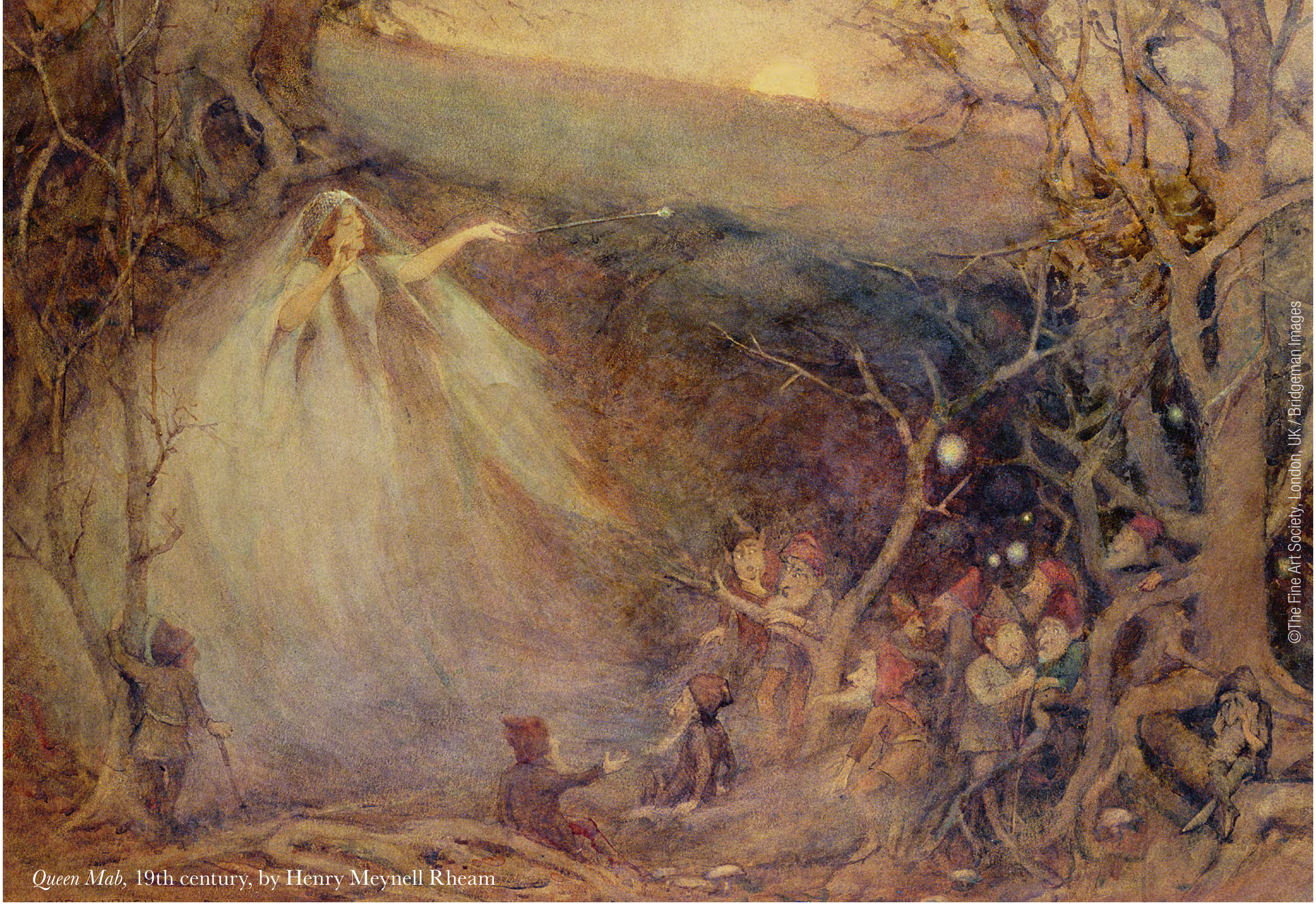
Gloriana of *The Faerie Queene*

The primmest of the fae queens, Gloriana is neither schemer nor seductress. She is forever fair, aboveboard, and noble in spirit—but she can still be as sexy as the baddest bad girls, in that I-heart-good-government kind of way. She rules an imaginary England in an epic allegory designed to please the earthly Gloriana herself, Queen Elizabeth I.

This queen keeps her private life *so* private that she doesn't even appear on an actual page. And yet she is everywhere, as an army of warriors, sorcerers, and damsels can think of little but the virtues that spread around her like a farthingale. While praising her to the sky, courtiers such as the gallant Redcrosse Knight and the chaste female warrior Britomart pry evil out of each corner of the kingdom, freeing up Gloriana's time to work on tax laws and stamping out Catholicism. Although we never



The Beguiling of Merlin, 1874,
by Edward Burne-Jones



Queen Mab, 19th century, by Henry Meynell Rheam

©The Fine Art Society, London, UK / Bridgeman Images

see Gloriana, we know she's no black-toothed elder, as Elizabeth was at the time Spenser was writing. She is luminous enough to seduce Prince Arthur, albeit only in his dreams. Just one hot night of imaginary passion is enough to make him tell the Red Crosse Knight,

From that day forth I lov'd that face divine;
From that day forth I cast in carefull mind
To seeke her out with labour, and long tyne,
And never vowd to rest till her I find.

This speech may read like a lovelorn excuse for not settling down to the task at hand—*making Camelot*—but it's understood that Arthur won't lie with Gloriana again, in dream or deed, until he earns her. She makes him want to be a better man.

Life Lesson: Delegate and inspire.

Mab of *Romeo and Juliet*

Teeny-tiny Mab is the faerie queen you're most likely to encounter, whether in dreams or in person. Blame her for everything from tangled hair to your neighbor's accident; though she be but little (to borrow from a different play), she is fierce.

Two thousand years ago, she started out as the cruel, beautiful wolf queen Medb of Irish folklore, all blue eyes and evil intentions. For *Romeo and Juliet,* Shakespeare shrank the legend down to a prankster in a chariot made of a hollow hazelnut and pulled by a gnat. She became the faeries' midwife, known especially for delivering dreams.

Mercutio warns Romeo,

… *she gallops night by night*
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love.

She's also the "hag" (his word, not mine) who finds virgins lying on their backs and "presses them and learns them first to bear." Whether Mercutio thinks this means she teaches sexual pleasure or eases childbirth is up for interpretation.

Little Mab can also be very cruel. If you are already one of those ladies who "straight on kisses dream," you'll like as not wake up with blistered lips. Or if you're a soldier, her chariot could roll over your neck and bring on nightmares of knives, ambushes, and slitting enemy throats.

Is it less alarming to know that she's responsible for those annoying mats of hair (elflocks) with which you wake up? Be warned that if you untangle them, you're inviting bad luck. Given the bloody bodies and multiple husbands that Medb/Mab has left in her wake—sometimes including Oberon, who is better known as Titania's partner—you should think twice about breaking out the hairbrush.

Life Lesson: Personal grooming is just a dream away from murder.

Titania of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Shakespeare's Titania is the most popular faerie ever to flit across the stage. She is also the most humiliated *and* the most forgiving, after having the ill fortune to fall hard for a bumpkin with the head of an ass.

When we meet Titania, she and her husband Oberon are in the midst of a marital spat. Titania has adopted a changeling child, and Oberon wants the lad for his own attendant. She says he's jealous. He calls her a wanton. She heads off to take a nap, and he orders Puck to drip faerie juice into her eyes so that she'll fall in love with the first person—or creature—she sees when she wakes.

That just happens to be the crude villager Bottom, onto whose shoulders Puck has grafted a donkey's head just for laughs. Titania goes all in—loving Bottom the way we all want to be loved:

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
Mine ear is much enamored of thy note.
So is mine eye enthrallèd to thy shape.
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

Who could fail to adore a queen who finds beauty in even such a ridiculous creature? As Shakespeare wrote elsewhere in the play, "Love looks not with the eyes but with the mind." True, Bottom's mind is not as fine as Titania's—but love is love. At least until Oberon grabs the changeling and decides to undo the spell.

When Titania sees clearly again, she is charmingly unashamed of her tryst with Bottom. She laughs at herself and forgives Oberon for his trick, and then all's well in the forest.

But there is the lingering problem of that little boy …

Life Lesson: Love with your whole heart.

Hans Christian Andersen's Snow Queen

Andersen's longest and yet most simple moral tale is usually given to children, though he insisted he never wrote for them. He created a faerie queen out of basic contradictions—she's beguiling but not a seductress, a mother figure but not nurturing, in the title but rarely the action. She's an enigma clad in snow who come-hithers a mean little boy named Kai, who rather deserves her painful kiss and lonely castle.

But once she's trapped her changeling, she doesn't even stay around to gloat; she leaves him trying to solve an endless puzzle and drives off on a whim to freeze Vesuvius. One can only speculate about what the volcano's heat might do to her outfit.

Naturally, we expect a life lesson about accepting rides from strangers. Let's take that as read.

Why does the Snow Queen take Kai only to neglect him? It doesn't seem to be for the joy of bossing around something larger than a snowflake or even because, like Titania, she longs for a child. Maybe it's just because she can—faerie queens do love to flex their power. And maybe there is no answer; she seems to lack the emotions that make faerie queens from Diana to Morgan le Fay and Titania relatable, if not likable.

The Snow Queen is the cold universe bearing down … random, godless, capricious.

Until, that is, Kai's childhood friend finds him and shatters the enchantment with a mention of Jesus. Kai and Gerda grow up fast, and the story ends—unusually for Andersen—happily, with a marriage.

Or is it so happy? Don't we miss the Snow Queen? Haven't we longed for her all the way through? Her absence makes for a melancholy twilight of the goddesses, the *Götterdämmerung* of the faerie queens.

But twilight is brief.

Great faerie queens are born and reincarnated in every era. Think of C.S. Lewis's White Witch (a literary daughter of the Snow Queen), who holds Narnia in perpetual winter until the Pevensie children take her down. And Mary Poppins, the spit-spot governess with the bottomless carpetbag and a particularly tough form of tough love: She could give any of the noble faeries a run for her money. Most recently, in graphic novels and video games, new versions of Morgan le Fay and Titania have been finding ways to kick mortal ass.

Saintly, wicked, confused, malicious, hypersensitive, and very, very clever—we must have our faerie queens.

Life Lesson: Childhood ends, but faerie queens do not.

* * *

Read an excerpt from Susann Cokal's latest novel, Mermaid Moon, *at enchantedlivingmagazine.com. Visit her online at susanncokal.com.*

Experience
The CELTIC MAGIC Series
YA fantasy-fiction

When Mairi learns the Celtic Myths are her ancestry, she goes from typical teen surfing the Pacific coast to powerful Druid traveling through time and FaerieRealms, battling evil druids and magical creatures.

CELTIC MAGIC
The Trinity Knot
"Be wary the gifts the faeries may give"
H R CONKLIN
CELTIC MAGIC
The Witch's Knot
"Autumn is a time for change"
H R CONKLIN
CELTIC MAGIC
The Faerie Knot
H R CONKLIN
CELTIC MAGIC
The Eternity Knot
H R CONKLIN

Available on Amazon
www.wildrosestories.com
@wildrosestoriesandcircles
#hrconklinauthor

FAERIE QUEEN BEAUTY SECRETS

BY ALISE MARIE, THE BEAUTY WITCH™

With silent grace she walks the wood by day, then transforms with the emergence of evening as she floats through the veil of night—sun and starlight weaving through her hair, kissing her skin, and dancing in her eyes. A vision of beauty, she enchants, even as she works her mischief alongside her magic. Effortless grace, radiance, charm are her birthright.

And yet, though the queen of the fae always appears perfect in her natural state, she *does* get a little help from her forest friends: The trees extend their branches to her, the flowers their petals, and the plants their essences to bathe her in the beauty of nature. Celestial shimmer is naturally captured within these offerings to give her eternal cosmic glow, whatever mystical adventures should arise. I'll let you in on a little secret: If you get on her good side, she *might* just share these potions with you.

Ah! What luck! You have been wonderful, I see! Here they are, each conjured with love and light from the earth and the heavens, representing different facets of the gem that is the faerie queen and resplendent in her powers of beauty and magic. Enjoy them with delight and abandonment, *mes belles fées.*

Queen Mab's Potion

Wings by Lights In The Forest

The Titan

Beauty Witch Secret: You can decant some of your potion into a small, travel-size spray bottle for on-the-go cleansing or for use as a hydrating mist whenever you need to lift your complexion *and* your spirit.

Brew La Fay

THE TITAN

Cleansing Dew

Yields approximately 3 ounces

Just like its namesake, this light and seemingly delicate potion is actually a force of nature. Designed to gently cleanse and tone the face, it keeps balance during seasonal shifts and mood swings (ahem, Titania) and generally disrupts anything that would endanger your precious skin. Use it morning and night, with a washable facial pad, followed by your favorite serum or crème. It is suitable for all skin types and smells divine.

2 ounces rose water
1 teaspoon jojoba oil
8 drops lavender essential oil
6 drops neroli essential oil
3 drops cedarwood essential oil
Seeds of one vanilla bean

Begin with the rose water in a 3-ounce glass bottle. Add the jojoba oil, then each essential oil, one at a time. As you concoct, ask each ingredient for its unique magic, feeling and visualizing not only personal power but the ability to temper it. Infuse your potion with this energy, so that your skin may always be protected from emotional and elemental stresses. Last, carefully slice the vanilla bean lengthwise, then gently scrape the tiny black seeds into your potion bottle. Cap it, and swirl vigorously in a clockwise direction. For best results, conjure this at the new moon and set it out in a window to receive the magic of the evening-into-morning light. With each use, give it a good swirl, as ingredients will settle.

Rose Beloved bringer of beauty and love, exquisite rose provides potent skincare powers and an opening of psychic awareness. Her magic includes strength that belies her delicate appearance.

Jojoba Similar to the skin's natural sebum, jojoba balances its production and absorbs quickly as it provides long-lasting hydration.

Lavender This treasured flower eases inflammation, cleanses, and gently clears away negativity (including blemishes) while relieving anxiety, negative feelings, and even restlessness. Its magical gifts include protection, love, and peace.

Neroli Sweetly scented, solar neroli keeps the oil in skin balanced and has potent antiseptic and regenerative powers. It brings love, luck, and abundance.

Cedarwood This beautiful, solar-ruled tree grants protection, abundance, healing, and the capacity for clearing negativity. Its beauty magic keeps skin youthful while soothing, repairing, and protecting from harmful bacteria.

Vanilla Venusian vanilla is rich in copper, which helps promote collagen and elastin production. It soothes, protects from environmental stresses, and carries an enchanted scent alongside powerful love and beauty magic.

QUEEN MAB'S POTION

Body Oil

Yields approximately 3 ounces

For your seductress side, this body oil is not only potent but is a ritual of sensuality all its own. Use this nightly to repair and fortify your skin all over, heighten your dreamtime visions, and inspire creativity. Better yet? Use its magic as you prepare for a moonlit rendezvous deep within the enchanted forest. It leaves your skin irresistibly smooth, soft, and scented for romantic intrigue. Rose, naturally, makes a second appearance here.

2 ounces grape-seed oil
1 piece cut damiana, or 1 teaspoon dried
1 teaspoon rose petals
.05 ounces vitamin E
8 drops jasmine essential oil
5 drops vetiver essential oil
3 drops patchouli essential oil
3 drops lime essential oil

Beneath the full moon, pour grape-seed oil into a glass bottle. Add the damiana and then the roses. You are conjuring a lusty, bewitching blend kissed by beauty, so make sure your visions and feelings are both powerful *and* optimistic. Add in the vitamin E and then the essential oils, one at a time, harnessing the power of each one. Seal the bottle, and give it a good clockwise swirl. Whether you use it right away or wait until the moment is upon you, set it out under the stars overnight. You're going to love this one.

Grape seed Lunar-ruled grape seed is rich in vitamins A and C for supreme skin support. It moisturizes deeply, protects from damage and moisture loss, reduces fine lines, and improves elasticity.

Damiana Ruled by fire, lusty damiana has long been revered by witches as an aphrodisiac. It elevates your stamina, enhances mood, and is an excellent tonic for overworked kidneys. A lesser known gift of this sexy plant is its ability to induce visions.

Vitamin E One of the most effective oils in any beauty potion, vitamin E heals damaged skin, including fine lines and wrinkles.

Jasmine Known as the Queen of the Night (à la Mab), sensual jasmine is an intoxicating aphrodisiac that knows a thing about beauty. A brilliant oil for reducing fine lines and strengthening skin's elasticity, jasmine also helps fade scars and hyperpigmentation.

Vetiver A time-tested witches' herb, vetiver brings luck and abundance, and protects that considerable wealth. Its earthy, lushly wooded aroma calls in the green spirits. It also heals skin and boosts cellular regeneration.

Patchouli Feminine and earthy, patchouli is more than a ubiquitous festival oil; it holds strong lust magic! It also brings forth creativity and abundance while providing relaxation, easing depressive feelings, and treating dry, irritated skin conditions.

Lime Fiery, solar lime brings love and protection while helping skin rejuvenate with vitamin C and antioxidants.

Beauty Witch Secret: A few drops of this on your face will go a long way as an age-delaying beauty oil. Test it first on the inside of your forearm, as ingredients are active.

Faerie Queen Beauty Secrets

Alise Marie

BREW LA FAY

Tea

Per cup

Sometimes even a faerie queen needs her rest. With all that healing and shape-shifting, the legendary Morgana deserves a recharge, and so do you. Try this restful brew any time you feel overextended and desiring of a soothing sip. It will also help you get the beauty sleep that so often eludes us.

1 cup spring water
1 teaspoon magnesium powder
1 teaspoon chamomile flowers
1 teaspoon passionflowers
Squeeze of lemon

As you prepare to unwind for the evening, put the magnesium citrate into a teacup or mug. Pour the spring water into a pot, add the flowers, and slowly heat to a near boil. When the brew is ready, add the lemon juice, and strain into your vessel (though you can certainly leave the flowers in there if you like). Stir quickly to dissolve. The brew will fizz wildly at first—this is the best sip of all! As you are drinking, allow the calm to wash over you and settle deep within. Breathe slowly and deeply as you enjoy it. Now settle into your flower bed for the rest you seek.

Magnesium Magnesium is a necessary mineral that fights inflammation in the body, alleviates depression, detoxifies, and promotes restful sleep.

Chamomile Solar power comes from gentle chamomile, added here for a soothing balance for your skin *and* your spirit. Besides its heavenly, calming scent, it carries the magic of love and harmony.

Passion Flower Ruled by Venus, this beautiful flower calms and brings peace. It is a potent relaxation herb that promotes restful sleep.

Lemon This cheerful lunar fruit brings love and happiness, lifts the spirit, balances pH, and gently detoxifies.

Beauty Witch Secret: Though you will lose the fizz, this can also be enjoyed as a cold elixir. If you can find the magnesium powder with natural raspberry-lemon flavor, I highly recommend!

Alise Marie is the author of The Beauty Witch's Secrets: Recipes and Rituals for the Modern Goddess *(Llewellyn, April 2022). Find her at thebeautywitch.com and on Instagram @thebeautywitchofficial.*

A Midsummer Night's Dream by Gustave Doré. Wikimedia Commons

"Faeries, come take me out of this dull world,
For I would ride with you upon the wind,
Run on the top of the disheveled tide,
And dance upon the mountains like a flame."
—William Butler Yeats, *"The Land of Heart's Desire"*

The faerie queens Titania, Queen Mab, and Morgan le Fay were beautiful. So beautiful, in fact, that they were virtually impossible to resist. Titania, Shakespeare's Queen of the Forest from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was fair and angelic-looking. Mab, the midwife, had a wispy, fragile beauty. And Morgan le Fay, a raven-haired enchantress, had a powerful dark allure.

All were skilled in the art of concocting potions, unguents, and elixirs from wild herbs and delicate flowers—favorites like rose, jasmine, chamomile, cedarwood, lavender, and neroli. And nothing could be more magical than to use them in a delicately scented floral veil or mist, like the ones below.

Ranavat Royal Tonique Jasmine Hydrating Mist
Jasmine is a white flower with an intoxicating fragrance, and jasmine essential oil softens and moisturizes the skin. It is also an effective hair conditioner: A few drops of jasmine essential oil mixed with argan or sweet almond oil patted through the hair can tame frizz. This mist is transportive—spray it on the skin for a glow or the hair to coat with a heady scent. *ranavat.com/products/royal-tonique*

SpaRitual Geranium Cedarwood Hydrating Mist
Geranium is not only a beautiful bloom; it is a lovely scent. Balanced beautifully with the woodsy smell of cedarwood and a sweet note of vanilla, it is nothing short of sublime. Perfect after the shower: Spray a mist in front of you, walk through it, and breathe in. *sparitual.com/products/geranium-cedarwood-hydrating-mist*

—Rosie Shannon

Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night and the minstrels
are back with their latest studio album.

BLACKMORE'S NIGHT

Blackmore's Night
Nature's Light
Blackmore's Night
Nature's Light
Blackmore's Night
Nature's Light
Blackmore's Night
Nature's Light

Nature's Light

Escape to another time with this mystical music
inspired by the magic of nature.

NEW ALLBUM OUT MARCH 12

Ltd. 2CD Hardcover Media Book | CD Digipak | Ltd. Yellow Vinyl Gatefold |
Heavyweight Black Vinyl Gatefold | Download | Streaming

WATCH OUT for new deluxe editions of Blackmore's Night's wonderful back catalogue later in 2021

EDEL FAMILY MEMBER

www.blackmoresnight.com · www.candicenight.com · www.ear-music.net

e·a·r MUSIC

MORGAN OF THE FAERIES

Powerful Sorceress, High Priestess, Faerie Queen

BY RONA BERG

I used to love to wander through the small, winding streets of Soho, in lower Manhattan, when it was a struggling artists' enclave years ago. There was a little shop I liked to visit; the windows drew me in every time.

The shop's owner, designer Liliana Casabel, was known for her floaty, ethereal fabrics, draped and cinched in ways that made the wearer feel like a warrior goddess. It was clear that the pieces—with names like Oracle Jacket and Gaia Dress—were designed for strong, sexy women who were used to making magic: Imagine a convergence of Wonder Woman, Isadora Duncan, Chrissie Hynde, Athena, and the shop's namesake, Morgan le Fay, of Arthurian legend.

The shop is still in business, and its collections, according to its website, are "inspired by a new idea of beauty, oftentimes referencing the mythical." That is in sync with Morgan le Fay, who, like the clothes she inspired, was a perfect mix of fairy godmother and wicked enchantress. Morgan was cunning, powerful, vengeful and dark—with black hair and fierce, flashing eyes. But she was also a faithful and loyal friend, a loving sister, and a gifted healer.

Independent, unpredictable, both good and evil, Morgan is still a bit under the radar compared with more famous, light-bearing faerie queens like Titania and Queen Mab. But she is in the legendary pantheon of powerful women who haunted—and enchanted—men throughout history with Eve, Circe, Medea, Lady Macbeth. Yet she hasn't quite gotten her due.

Morgan was a powerful sorceress, a necromancer, and a high priestess of Avalon, which was home to an ancient female-centric religion that worshipped a powerful goddess and predated the Druids. Avalon was a world shrouded in mist, an alternate dimension, invisible to those without the Sight. Morgan inherited the gift of Sight, handed down through generations of women: her aunt Viviane, the high priestess of Avalon; her mother Igraine; her grandmother; and back through the ages. When she trained her Sight on it, Morgan could see the future.

She was by far the most interesting woman in King Arthur's Court, which stretched well beyond Camelot into the outlying kingdoms in the British Isles. Guinevere, Arthur's wife and Lancelot's love, was beautiful but a bit of a blonde milquetoast. Igraine was intelligent and gifted with the Sight but still subservient to her husband Uther Pendragon, father to Morgan's half-brother Arthur. (More on this later, it gets complicated!) When Uther died, Igraine was swept away on a wave of grief so unfathomable that she chose to, as Shakespeare would say, "Take thee to a nunnery." And so off she went.

Morgan's aunt Morgause, wife of King Lot in the North Country, was such a consistent schemer in her efforts to maneuver her son Gawaine onto Arthur's throne that she was pretty much one-dimensional. Viviane, the high priestess of Avalon, is bold, sometimes cruel, but nonetheless fairly predictable. And the enchanted Lady of the Lake, keeper of King Arthur's sword Excalibur is, well, literally submerged underwater. Not much to talk about there.

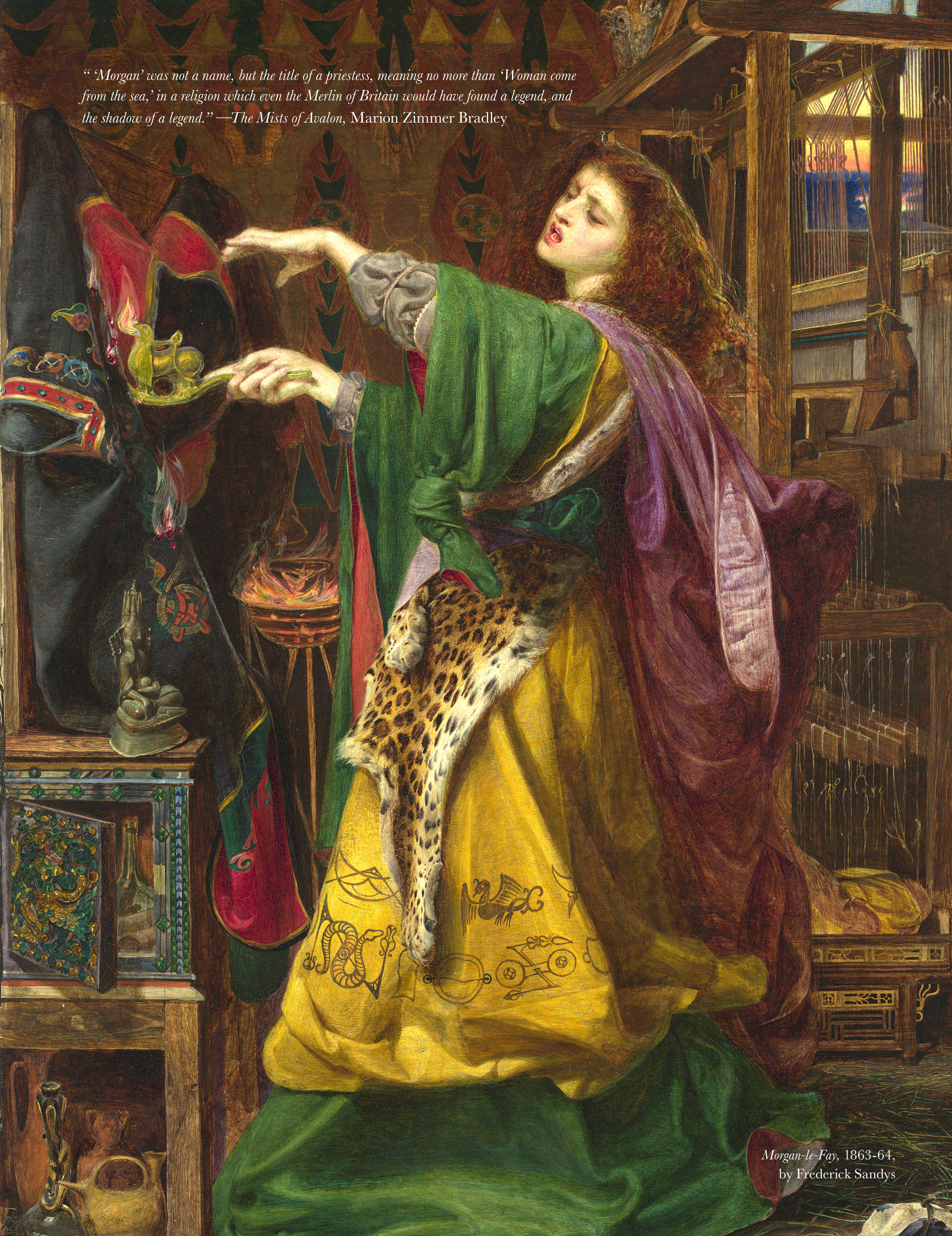
But Morgan is a complicated, headstrong, fiercely independent woman, trained to inherit the mantle of high priestess of Avalon herself. On Avalon, the high priestess channeled the goddess, who oversaw the cycles of nature and took care of the growth of crops and fields as well as people and animals. Tremendously skilled in herbal medicine—so much so that there were rumors that she was a witch—Morgan defied her destiny and left Avalon to live at King Arthur's Court, showing tremendous courage.

Morgan made choices that were unheard of for a woman in her time. Whereas most women were married off at fifteen or sixteen, Morgan was still single at thirty until she was tricked into marriage. Educated and fearless, she traversed the kingdom despite the bands of marauding Saxons who were not kind to women traveling alone. She was sexually liberated, choosing liaisons with the most desirable men at the court without shame or remorse. And she was full of contradictions: morally compromised yet fervently loyal to the Goddess; in love with Sir Lancelot but willing to use the dark arts to move him out of the way if she couldn't have him; able to use her skill with "herbs and simples" for good and evil; accused of plotting to murder Merlin; and bearer of a son with Arthur, her own half-brother.

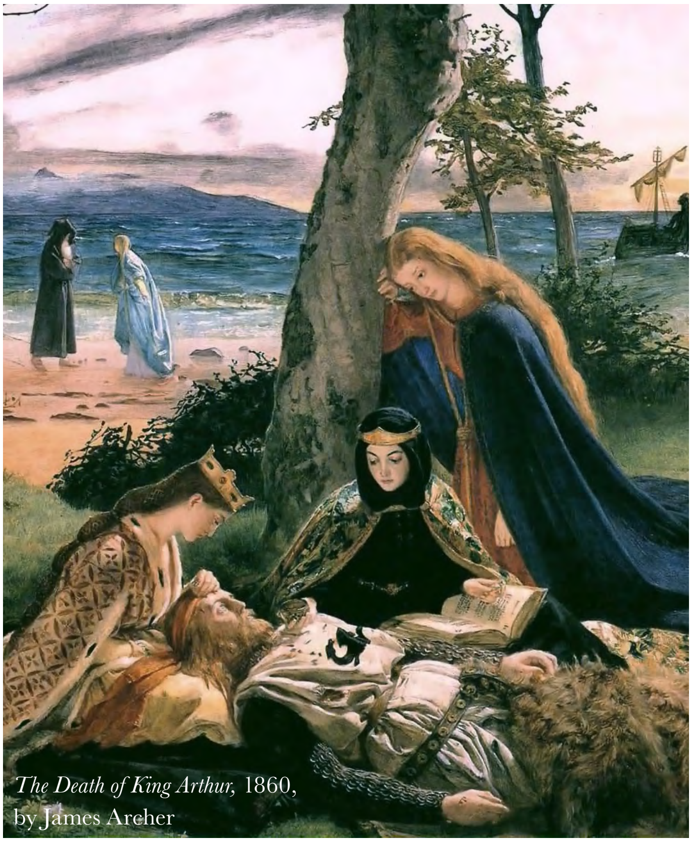
Morgan had been raised in worship of the matriarchal Mother Goddess, who dates back well over 8,000 years. With this strong female deity behind her, she never felt the need to buckle before men. The Mother Goddess figures that have survived from the Paleolithic times represent the power within women to create and nourish life. But in King Arthur's time, the idea of a strong female deity was at odds with the spread of Christianity, which gave power to men and worshipped the male God and Jesus Christ. Unlike the paternalistic Christianity of the day, Morgan's religion—and the legend of Avalon—elevated women and put them in positions of leadership and power, while Christian priests considered women weak, inferior, evil, or unclean. Christians regarded Goddess worship and Druidic religion, with their strong connection to the natural world, as pagan. Though the word was intended as an insult, the followers of the old ways did not take it as such.

Morgan, like Merlin, Arthur, and Viviane, believed the two

" 'Morgan' was not a name, but the title of a priestess, meaning no more than 'Woman come from the sea,' in a religion which even the Merlin of Britain would have found a legend, and the shadow of a legend." —The Mists of Avalon, Marion Zimmer Bradley



Morgan-le-Fay, 1863-64,
by Frederick Sandys



The Death of King Arthur, 1860, by James Archer

religions could co-exist and, in fact, overlap. There are more than a thousand examples of "ring stones" or "stone circles" that survive in the British Isles, where Morgan's Goddess religion held rites. These circles were considered sacred spaces, whose stones were often aligned to the sun or moon. Stonehenge and Craigh na Dun, the fictional stone circle in *Outlander*, are examples. In the French Alps, these are known as pagan gardens.

In *The Mists of Avalon*, Morgan "recalled what Lancelet had said in his despair, that there were neither Gods nor Goddess, but these were the shapes mankind gives, in terror, to what they cannot make into reason." Morgan knew that "whether the Goddess took the form they thought, or whether the Goddess was only another name for the great unknown of nature," it represented "the way of life and thought to which she was pledged" and which she had deserted. "She had forsaken the great tides and rhythms of the earth."

Morgan lived in one of the most brutal and barbaric periods in the world's history. War was a constant, and the Saxons from the north could be counted on to sack and pillage the villages. No wonder they needed magic in those days. For good or evil, magic, at least, represented hope. Yet in legend, a code of chivalry and honor ruled the lands. And anyone who has not been enchanted by the tales of brave knights and fair ladies; of tournaments, heraldry and jousts; of the pageantry and honor of the brave Knights of the Round Table, is really missing out.

In Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur,* a 15th century version of the Arthurian legend (retold in a modern edition by Gerald J. Davis that is worth checking out), Morgan le Fay is said to be "as fair as any Lady may be." Of Morgan, Mallory writes that "she learned so much of enchantments that she was a great scholar of Necromancy." But in his portrayal, she's placed squarely in the camp of evil: betrayer of Arthur, her half-brother and high King.

We don't know whether King Arthur really existed or if Morgan le Fay was as legend describes her. Scholars are not sure whether such questions can even be answered. But archaeologists have dug up artifacts at Tintagel, said to be the birthplace of King Arthur, which include jewelry, artifacts, tableware, and other potential evidence that it was inhabited at the time when legend places the Knights of the Round Table there. That is, we know for certain that someone lived there, and it may as well have been King Arthur, Sir Lancelot, Sir Gawaine, Guinevere—all the gallant knights and fair ladies. And Arthur's sister, Morgan le Fay, would have been there too, making life a lot more interesting, and paving the way for strong women. Whether or not the historical record preserves it, I'd like to believe her magic was real.

* * *

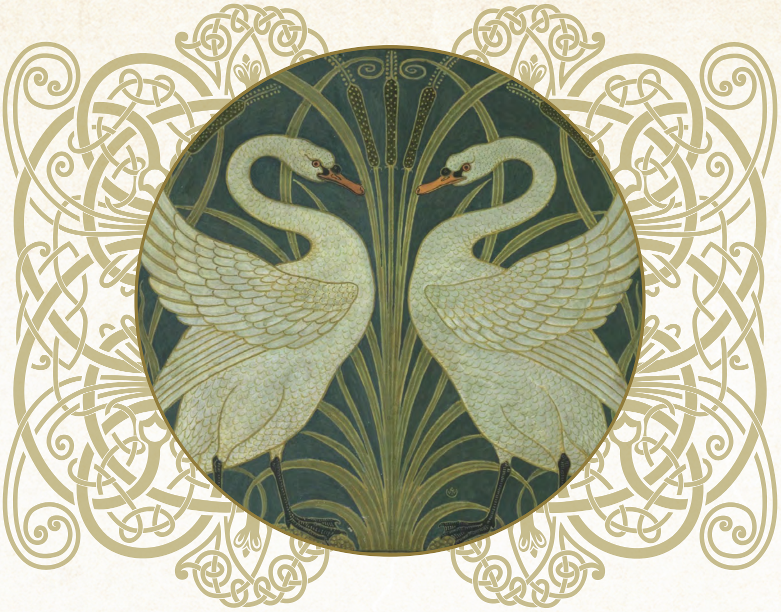
Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg.

The Moss Goddess

Magic wands, make-up brushes, paint brushes & other enchanted creations by The Moss Goddess

Photography by @egenskiphotos

themossgoddess.com | @themossgoddess



Two Swans, circa 1875, by Walter Crane. Wikimedia Commons

Étaín

My Personal Journey With a Forgotten Faerie Queen

by Grace Nuth

You would be forgiven for not knowing her name. She isn't Morgan le Fay or fair Titania. In fact, we could find only one artwork depicting the faerie queen Étaín to illustrate this article. But she is a faerie queen all the same and the one whose story is dearest to my heart.

Who can say why one character from myth speaks to our hearts more than any other? Some would follow the Morrigan into battle without a thought; others feel their hearts stir at the thought of Diana. I first heard the story of Étaín from a self-proclaimed bard when I was in my early 20s, almost two decades ago. Whatever magic awakens when a person first hears of the mythic archetype who will be their guide for life, I felt it then.

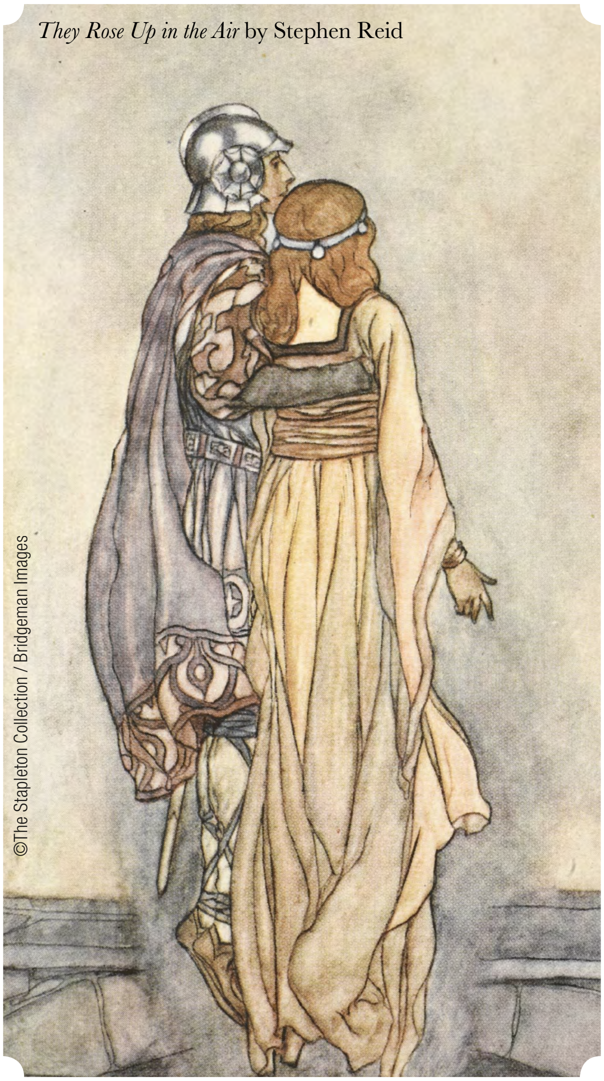
Étaín first appears in *Tochmarc Étaíne*, or "The Wooing of Étaín," a story in the Irish mythological cycle. As for the pronunciation of her name, I have heard numerous suggestions ranging from "Eh-tayne" (how I usually say it) to "Aydeen" to "Eh-thayne."

Once there was a faerie king by the name of Midir, who fell in love with Étaín. He made her his wife and they were very happy together, but his first wife, Fuamnach, was furious about their union. She turned Étaín into a pool of water, from which emerged Étaín transformed into a fly. The fly remained with Midir until Fuamnach conjured a storm, which blew Étaín away and buffeted her on its winds, nearly breaking her. After years of fighting the winds, she landed near the faerie Aengus, who made her a little bower in which to rest. This respite, however, was short, since Fuamnach again found her and conjured another wind, torturing her with exhaustion until she landed in the wine glass of a mortal queen. The queen drank from the glass and became pregnant with Étaín, who was reborn in mortal form with no memory of who she'd been before.

Midir, burning with love for his beloved, searched through land and sky for where she might have gone and finally found her in her mortal body. But this was not before many years had passed, and she had been married to a king, Eochu Airem. Midir then came to Tara to challenge Eochu to a game of fidchell, a Celtic game similar to chess. The two kings, mortal and disguised faerie, played their first game, and Midir gambled a fine group of horses. That night, Midir came to Étaín in her dreams, whispering to her of his love and of her true and forgotten form as a queen of faerie. The next day, the kings played another game, and on it went, with Eochu proposing outlandish stakes and Midir intentionally losing and performing magical feats like building walls and forts for the mortal king overnight each time. And each night, Midir would come to Étaín in her dreams, as she slowly began to remember the truth of who she was.

Finally, Midir went to Eochu for one final game, and the stakes were seemingly simple on his part. If Midir won, he could claim one embrace from the queen, Étaín. Of course, the king agreed, having won many previous rounds, but this time Midir showed his prowess and claimed his prize. The furious Eochu insisted that the embrace occur in his throne room, and when the day to claim the prize arrived, Midir found the castle surrounded and guarded by Eochu's soldiers to prevent Midir from escaping with Étaín after he claimed his rightful prize.

Midir walked up to Étaín, and she recognized him and knew her own truth. When he embraced her, she kissed him, and the two transformed into a pair of swans, flying up to a tall window in the chamber and away, back to their kingdom.



They Rose Up in the Air by Stephen Reid

©The Stapleton Collection / Bridgeman Images

The myth continues from here, and alas, there is not a happy ending. But the tale I have recounted here compelled me from the moment that I heard it—the wooing of Étaín, the love story. Of course there are some problems with this myth when one looks at it with a modern eye. Fuamnach is cast as the villain in the piece when she is rather like a Hera character to Midir's Zeus, the first wife who actually has every right to her anger. But just as Callisto, Demeter, and other goddesses—all unwitting "other women" who caught Zeus's eye—are still beloved by many, so Étaín is beloved to me. But not for her love story. Étaín herself pulls at my heart for another reason, which can be explained with a Welsh word that has no English equivalent: *hiraeth*.

Hiraeth means a longing for a home that no longer exists or never was. It is the term for an inexplicable bittersweet melancholy when we smell something and it conjures a memory not our own or not quite graspable, or see the shadows fall across the trees in the woods in a way that breaks our heart and we just don't know why. What must it have been like, I've asked myself for almost two decades now, to be Étaín, only knowing her one mortal life until Midir came into her dreams and reminded her of who she had been before? What turmoil of longing and confusion must she have felt? This detail of Midir appearing in her dreams is not found in the original manuscript but has been added over the years and become a part of her mythos. To me, it is the most important part.

When I think of faeries, I feel this same sort of longing. Sometimes, those of us who love faeries are asked a question in interviews or candid conversation: "But do you really believe in them?" For me, the answer is absolutely yes. I believe in them both on the literal physical level and as a magical concept. But the main reason I believe in faeries is *hiraeth*. When I read their stories or feel their magic in the woods, I feel this *hiraeth*, and I relish it. The important thing is not whether faeries are objectively real. This is why when the first question is often followed by a second, "Have you ever seen one?" I answer truthfully that I don't think I would want to. Faeries are not about proof but possibility. They stand in the liminal place where questions aren't answered. But there is always this *hiraeth* for those of us who feel it when we hear their stories or sense them near—this vague and bittersweet pang of remembering, though the details may slip through our grasp like fog.

Étaín is the archetype of *hiraeth* for me. I can feel her yearning for a life she's never known, imagine how she might have cried sometimes when light fell in a certain way or laughed without understanding why. I had my own experience of this feeling when I went to a concert a year or so after I first heard Étaín's story. The musician was Tori Amos, a fire-haired pixie siren whose music had helped guide me through my teen years. I sat in my seat as she wove her spell throughout the concert, and I cheered and laughed with everyone else. But then she came back for a final encore, and she played a song I'd never heard before. The name of the song was "Etienne," a name with a different origin from my faerie queen but a very similar sound.

Amos sat down at the piano, feet bare, and began to sing. "Etienne, Etienne, hear the west wind whisper my name. Etienne, Etienne. By the morning maybe we'll remember who I am." It felt like I didn't breathe for the entire song. The tears fell silently down my face as the last notes echoed from the keys and the audience cheered and began to leave. My concert date turned to me and was shocked to see my expression. I didn't stand up until the concert hall was almost empty.

"Maybe we'll remember who I am." Perhaps. And perhaps not. But I wouldn't trade this *hiraeth,* this yearning, for all the objective knowledge in the world. Étaín is my faerie queen, and she reminds me of what it's like to remember without remembering, to yearn for a place I've never seen.

◆

Grace Nuth is a writer, artist, and model living in central Ohio with her husband, black cats, and a garden full of fairies. She is also co-author of The Faerie Handbook. *To follow her projects, please visit gracenuth.com.*

Photography by
MARSHA STECKLING
Model SHARRON ROADS

VERONICA VARLOW

Life of a Love Witch

You, dear darling reader, have been enchanted by your own faerie queen. Whether she lives inside you or exists as an influence in your world, her spirit is what lures you to wrap your fingers around the covers of this very magazine and devour the pages. Perhaps at school, you tiptoed into Shakespeare's world with the sole purpose of meeting the golden-haired Titiania, the queen of faeries, or perhaps you were lured by the dark-edged Morgan le Fay, immortal queen of the fae, who was described in tales as a sorceress, a witch, and an enchantress.

Many childhood fairy tales featured princesses that needed saving, damsels in distress, and girls wandering by mistake. This was not so for the faerie queens, not for the witches, not for the likes of the sorceress and the enchantress. No. These powerful females stood in their power and saved themselves.

Grandma Helen

Right now, as your eyes read these words, there is an electricity within you that buzzes with your own power. It is your own life force, your own sorcery, your very own unique magick. It is the truth, and you know it is the truth, and in this power lies something within you that shares a common thread with the enchantments of the greatest faerie queens. Within you lies a powerful magick that belongs to you and you alone, and on nights when you tilt your head back to stand in the ghostly illumination of the moon, something inside you unlocks and whispers your own legend.

I know this to be true because faerie queens arrive in all forms, and they enchant our lives and become part of us, and it is our responsibility to then enchant others and pass that powerful magick on, so that the spirit of the faerie queen lives on immortal.

I pass on these words of encouragement and magick because they were taught to me by my own version of a faerie queen, my Grandma Helen! If you're a regular reader of my column, you recognize that name, and in fall of this year, my book *Bohemian Magick* will be released, spilling all the secrets of Grandma Helen's magick and spells that she raised me with. Grandma Helen's presence radiated with the energy of a true faerie queen as her magick was rooted in the enchantments of the forest and nature. Here's a spell for getting secret messages from trees that she taught me, that I would like to pass on to you. I added a special incantation that I wrote for the ritual, so that my Grandma Helen's magick and my magick is combined!

Dreaming With Trees

Before beginning this ritual, it will help to get in touch with your inner faerie queen. Adornment magick works wonders and will help you walk into an enchanted world. Adornment magick is simply wearing or decorating yourself with purpose for your ritual. What makes you feel beautiful? Do you have a flower crown that you adore? Or perhaps a special amulet, like a bracelet, ring, or necklace that holds meaning to you? Perhaps just by the simple act of painting your nails a shimmering bold color will do. I love to put on my red velvet hooded cloak that my witch sister, designer Vanessa Mercedes, made for me. Whatever you put on, do it with intention, as clothing, jewelry, and adornments add to your enchantment.

Begin by going on a silent walk in the woods or a local park. Allow yourself to slip into the mindset of imagination that came so easily to you as a child. The dress-up of your adornment magick should help you with that! When you are ready, stamp your right foot down three times on the earth. Place your feet powerfully shoulder-width apart on the ground and imagine strong roots growing out of the bottom of your feet. Hold your arms up like strong branches growing to the sky. Say the following aloud three times with your voice increasing from a whisper the first time to a powerfully voiced incantation by the third time:

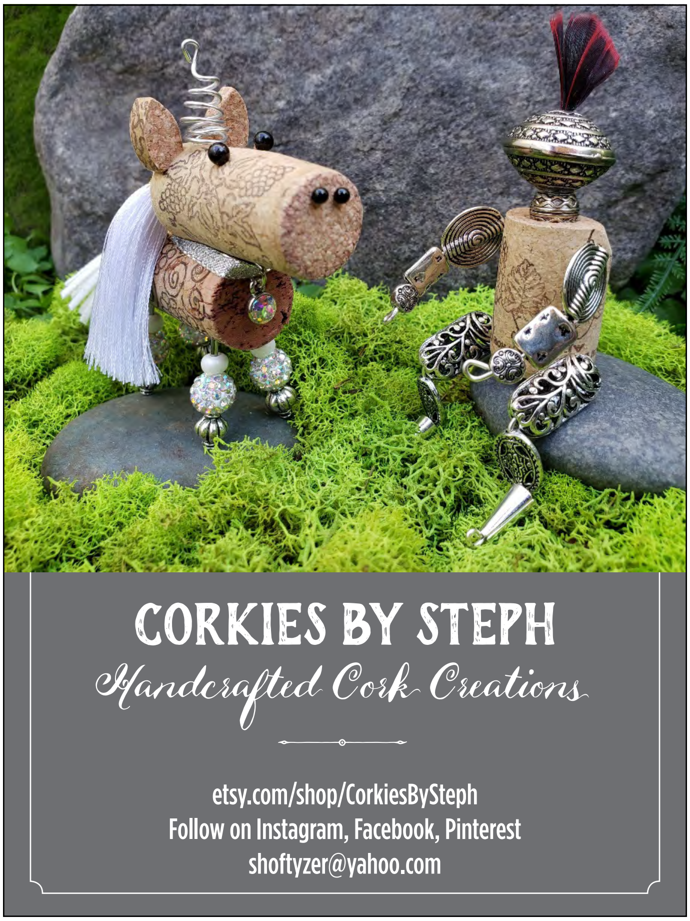
"Oak, willow, birch, and elm
I knock on the door of the faerie realm
On this walk, I ask the faerie queen
To enchant my nights with a magick dream,
Gift me a stick, or a fallen piece of bark,
To open secret worlds when the sky grows dark,
A gift from the trees to place under my pillow at night,
To give me strength and power and second sight."

Finish by saying, "See it. Be it. So be it!" Then clap your hands loudly once and hold your hands out as if the spell is being cast like a wide net from your fingertips.

Keep your eyes open and your senses alert. The right fallen piece of bark or stick shall call to you. Take it home, and sleep with it beneath your pillow for seven days straight. Write down the magickal dreams and communication you receive from the wise tree. At the end of the seven days, return the piece of tree to the forest or turn it into a powerful wand, just like a faerie queen would!

* * *

Veronica Varlow's book Bohemian Magick *will be released in the autumn of 2021 by HarperDesign—and packed with secret spells and rituals passed down from Grandma Helen. Read more about Veronica Varlow's Witch Camp and Love Witch Tarot School on lovewitch.com. Find her on Instagram @veronicavarlow.*



CORKIES BY STEPH
Handcrafted Cork Creations

etsy.com/shop/CorkiesBySteph
Follow on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest
shoftyzer@yahoo.com

SACRED HAGS ORACLE
Visionary Guidance for Dreamers, Witches, and Wild Hearts
Danielle Dulsky
illustrations by Janine Houseman
A 56-Card Deck & Guidebook

DIVINATION with the SACRED HAGS

"This epic oracle deck will empower you to reclaim your divine heritage via the power of the Sacred Hag."
— Trista Hendren,
creatrix of The Girl God anthologies

NEW WORLD LIBRARY
www.newworldlibrary.com

Raiment for a FAERIE QUEEN

BY CAROLYN TURGEON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELIZABETH ELDER

What better way to end an an homage to faerie queens than with a magical, glittering queen riding on a unicorn? In fact, when said queen (model Courtney Allegra) and her enchanted helpers—photographer Elizabeth Elder, gown designer JoEllen Elam Conway (a.k.a. Firefly Path), and headdress designer Caley Johnson (a.k.a. Miss G Designs)—gathered in a park near San Diego to capture these images, a group of hikers crossed their path and one little girl ran ahead of the group not believing her eyes. We imagine that humans have always felt this way when coming upon queens in the forest, and luckily (or unluckily) for the little girl, this benevolent queen did not snatch her away like the queens of myth and instead left some of her faerie magic behind.

Every faerie queen needs a crown, you included. For this queen, Johnson imagined something light and airy and whimsical. A unicorn-riding queen especially would need a crown she could wear while jumping on and off her steed and flitting through forest pathways, something with wings (by HelloFaerie). When she saw Elam's inspiration fabric, a gorgeous beaded pink trim, she knew she wanted to have sparkle and made a wreath-style crown with crystals hanging down the front.

To make your own crown, she suggests fashioning some crafting foam into a wreath that fits your head and then deciding what kind of faerie you want to be: *What is your magic?* Are you a more earthy queen, with moss and mushrooms on your crown? Or a more decadent one, all about crystals and sunshine? And then get out your glue gun and go wild. Her reason for making headpieces—extravagant and wonderful—comes from a place of pure joy: Anyone at all can wear them and feel amazing. "No matter your age, sex, or body shape, there is a headdress for you," she says. "You can put one on and say, 'I'm a badass.' You just become *magical*."

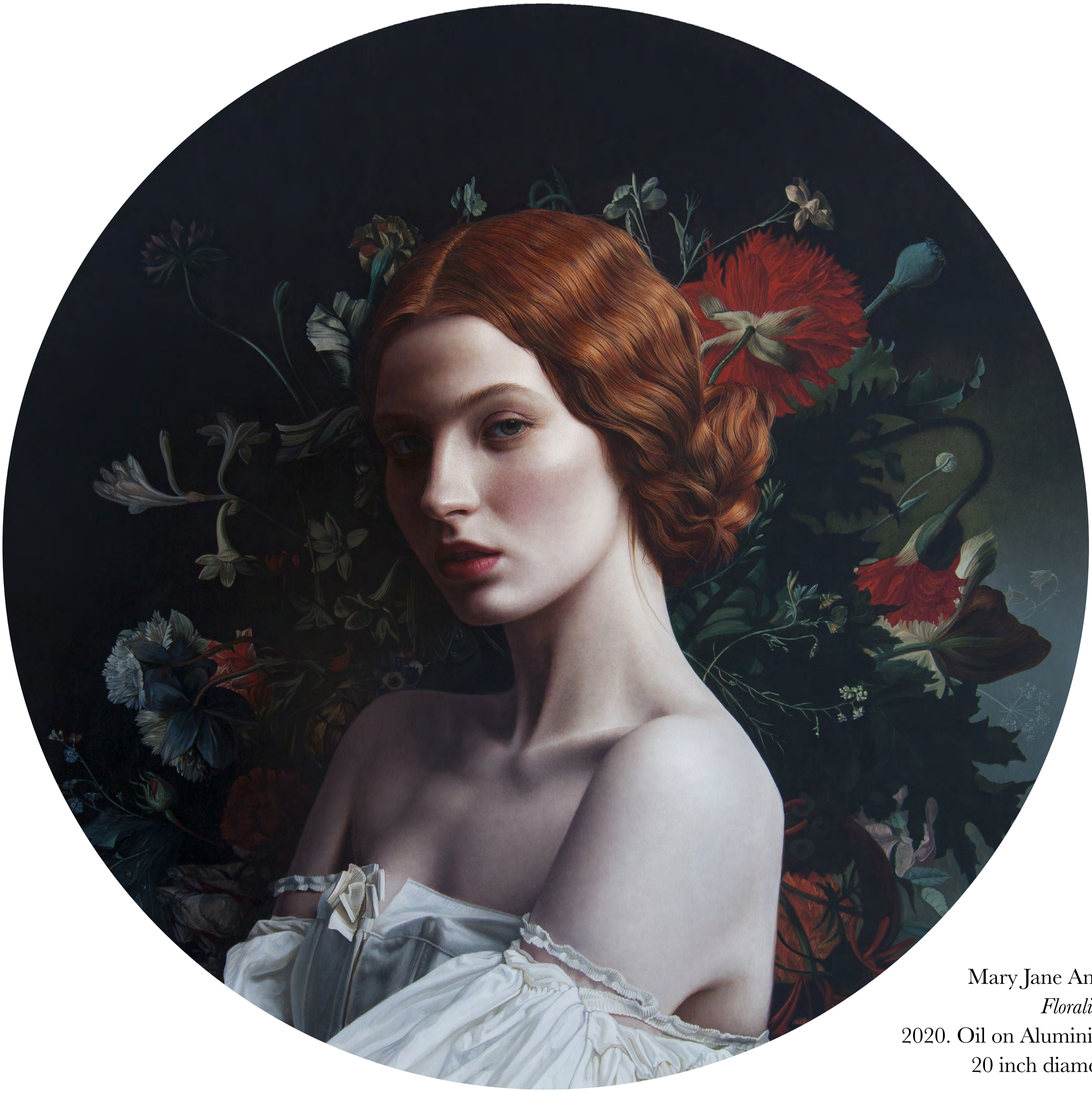
Elam has advice too for nourishing your inner faerie queen. "It can be difficult to feel like a faerie queen," she says, "with the state of the world right now. But when I put effort into small things, it gives me a boost of magic and escapism." Among those things are filling her home and studio with beautiful creations and having fresh flowers and candles. She's even decided to make drinking water beautiful: "Lately, I've been cutting star fruit and freezing the slices, then adding them and raspberries into my flavored sparkling water, a faerie flourish to a daily necessity."

And sometimes she'll wear her elf ears on a rare trip to the grocery store. "The reactions are mixed between confusion and delight," she says. "But this is for me, not them! I choose these tiny details to spark a little magic in my life."

Perhaps you might take some inspiration from these images and this issue and embrace some faerie queen magic, whether by festooning your drinks with fruit or donning a magical headdress or pair of elf ears when venturing into the word at large. As Elam asks, "What little fantasy choices keep you dreaming and moving forward?"

* * *

Follow photographer Elizabeth Elder on Instagram @emackphoto. Find model Courtney Allegra on Instagram @itscourtneyallegra. Visit the designers on Instagram—Firefly Path @fireflypath, Miss G Designs @missgdesigns, and wing maker L Marie @hellofaerie.



Mary Jane Ansell
Floralia II
2020. Oil on Aluminium
20 inch diameter

THIS YEAR'S ENCHANTED LIVING AWARD WINNER

The Art Renewal Center (ARC) Salon is the largest competition in the world for representational art, receiving approximately 5,000 entries from eighty-three countries this past year. We at *Enchanted Living* are excited to showcase this oil painting by Mary Jane Ansell, *Floralia II*, which is lush and undoubtedly faerie queen-esque and the winner of ARC's special *Enchanted Living* Award for 2021. "*Floralia II* and the series of works she comes from has been such a joy to work on," Ansell says, "especially during the uncertainty and upset of the last year. I know I am not alone in finding huge comfort in nature more than ever during this period, and I've found myself increasingly welcoming its beauty into my work."

The 15th International ARC Salon Exhibition, consisting of approximately 100 works from the competition, will first open at Sotheby's NY this July and then travel to the European Museum of Modern Art, in Barcelona, from October 8 to December 12, 2021. The Art Renewal Center will be accepting entries for its next Salon competition from November 1, 2021, through February 16, 2022.

FROM OUR READERS

For this issue we asked our readers:
How do you make yourself feel like a faerie queen?

Illustrations ©Guinevere von Sneeden

I love Queen Titania, so I find ways to incorporate elements into my daily routine that draw on the legends surrounding Titania, like honey-hued nails and gossamer fabrics. I always imagine that she really enjoyed things from India, so I often make Indian food too. —*Jennifer Zahra Zeaiter*

How do I make myself feel like those all-powerful, super magical ladies of lore? By reading. I read books set in fantastical worlds in which strong fiery woman set forth on adventures, traveling across magical lands filled with the strange and wild, overcoming challenges and emerging victorious. I immerse myself completely and empathize so strongly with a beloved female heroine that for a short time, she is me. —*Rhiannon Hartley*

Wearing an ensemble that makes me feel connected to the element of air (to feel as free and light as these winged beings), luxuriating in the outdoors with a picnic, some enchanted reading material, and sprightly Celtic music. It is vital to wear slip-on shoes for maximum skin to earth connection! —*@moonpagan.magick*

Making dandelion crowns with my baby girl, wearing gold shimmer on my eyes, drinking flower tea, and learning fairy tales by heart. —*Jessica Pritchard*

Taking long walks in the forest in the early morning when there's still a thin layer of mist clinging to the ground. Being alone with the trees and the flurry of activity among the fauna makes me feel privy to another domain, in between one world and another. —*Clodagh Johnston*

The multisensory experience: Forest throw over the quilt, houseplants, lush music, spicy teas, and lots of layers of earthy colors, even if I'm just at home. Spoil yourself, just for you. —*@blackmoonbellydance*

I feel like a faerie queen when festival season starts! All year long I am a regular human, but as festival season approaches my creative juices start flowing and my faerie alter ego itches to come out. I love creating my new costume for the upcoming season, and it is so rewarding to see the vision in my mind come to life. The ultimate feel-good moment is the reaction I get when I unveil my faerie queen alter ego at festival. There is no better feeling in the world to me. —*@forest_fairy_20*

Glitter! —*Paula Kilpatrick*

I enter the room with magical forest music playing in my back pocket, throw sparkly sequins all over the floor, and then tell my fiancé that he is a good loyal subject! —*@hellyblossom*

When I am restless and seek enchantment, I go out to dance upon grass with my lovely silver dance wings. As I spin and whirl, they make beautiful curved paths in the air, and they catch the winds and glitter in the sunlight. They make me feel wild and fierce, part of nature and at peace. —*Helen Marsden*

I feel like a faerie queen when I put on a pretty dress or outfit for no other reason than to feel pretty and good about myself, and handmade jewelry that holds a special meaning to take with me wherever I go. —*@art.of.jen*

I am writing a novel about a faerie queen, and to channel her energy, I like to put on my flower crown. I won it at the Renaissance Faire for my fiftieth birthday, so you know it must be magic! —*Kimberly Bea*

I love alone time in nature! On a hike, in a flower field, paddling out on a surf board ... but I also feel like a faerie queen through small acts of kindness toward Mother Earth! For example, when I help reorient a lost turtle who is in the middle of the road going away from his home in the pond. —@seafairysarah

Make a little magic
with heat resistant, high-quality, beautifully thick wigs from
arda wigs

The Enchanted LIBRARY

The Mermaid HANDBOOK
An Alluring Treas
LITERATURE, LORE,
RECIPES, and PROJE
CAROLYN TURGEON
THE Faerie Handbook
An Enchanting Compendium of LITERATURE, LORE, ART, RECIPES, and PROJECTS
THE EDITORS OF FAERIE MAGAZINE
The Unicorn HANDBOOK
A Spellbinding Collection of LITERATURE, LORE, ART, RECIPES, and PROJECTS
CAROLYN TURGEON

Read all about fairies, mermaids, and unicorns in this dazzling trilogy from the team at ***Enchanted Living.*** *These stunning compendiums cover fashion and beauty; arts and culture; and home, food, and entertaining with step-by-step crafts and recipes.*

HARPER DESIGN

Available at **EnchantedLivingMag.com** *and wherever books are sold.*